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DOCTORAL THESIS

Internet Censorship Offending : a Preliminary Analysis of the Social and Behavioural Patterns of Offenders.

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Internet Censorship Offending:

*A preliminary analysis of the social and
behavioural patterns of offenders.*

Angela Carr

This thesis is submitted to Bond University in fulfilment of the requirement is for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

This thesis represents my own work and contains no material which has been previously submitted for a degree or diploma at this University or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement is made.

Signature: (Angela Carr) Date:

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Summary

During the past decade, significant public concern has focused on the use of the Internet to access child pornography and other legally objectionable material. Media reference to individuals involved in such activity typically portrays them as socially isolated 'paedophiles', 'perverts' and 'sexual predators' whose offence behaviour is encouraged by on-line associations with others who share their interest in this material. Although academic literature does not tend to adhere to the sensationalism of these views, it too suggests that on-line networks may be important in understanding the behaviour of individuals who seek to gratify an interest in legally objectionable material.

A major aim of this thesis was to examine the relationship between involvement in Internet based social activity and involvement in accessing legally objectionable material via the Internet. As such, data collected during the investigation of a sample of 145 individuals identified as using the Internet to access legally objectionable material was subjected to a series of explorative analyses. These analyses revealed significant associations between individuals' use of Internet applications facilitating directed, two way communication (eg. Email and ICQ) during the process of accessing legally objectionable material and indicators of increased personal investment in offence related activities.

A second goal of this thesis was to identify variables associated with offenders' decisions to engage in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing legally objectionable material. In turn, criminological and communications theory and research

pertaining to the interpersonal behaviours that individuals engage in during criminal actions, and the characteristics of individuals who make use of socially facilitative Internet applications, was reviewed. Based on the findings of this review, it was hypothesised that offenders who engage in regular interaction with others outside of the Internet environment would be more likely than those who did not to seek out opportunities for interaction in the Internet environment. In line with this hypothesis, further systematic and detailed analysis of the data revealed an association between opportunities for interpersonal interaction in an offender's home or work environment and the likelihood that offenders would make use of Internet applications facilitating on-line social interaction.

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Introduction

Crime and the Internet

In the 1960s the United States Defence Department and several research Universities laid the foundations for what we now refer to as the Internet. Initially conceived as an advanced research and strategic communication network, it quickly developed into a much less formalised means for researchers to share information via electronic messaging and bulletin boards. This led to the creation of newsgroups and eventually to the birth of the World Wide Web in the early 1990s. From that point forward, public use of the Internet expanded at an exponential rate. By the mid 1990s over 30 million people were believed to have access to the Internet (Krol, 1994) via an estimated 30,000 computer networks connected to over 1.5 million computers (Jones, 1995). At that time the number of Internet users was reported to be growing by 10 percent each month (Jones, 1995), resulting in several million more gaining access each year since then (Flaherty, Pearce and Rubin, 1998). In April 2005, the Internet was reported to serve approximately 454 million users worldwide; three million more than in March 2005 (Nielson//Netratings, 2005).

The Internet as we know it today is essentially the connection point for a range of computer networks, enabling them to link up with each other and for users to access and exchange information via these linkages. The vast number of individuals known to be accessing the Internet and the international spread of the medium suggests that at any one time there may be literally thousands of individuals engaged in Internet based activities.

As more and more people come on line, more and more applications are developed to meet their needs, many by the users themselves (Thomas and Wyatt, 1999). Examples of this development process include the introduction of real time text and image transmission applications allowing simultaneous communication and interaction between individuals using applications such as Internet Relay Chat, ICQ and other 'instant messaging' services. More recent developments include the movement of real time communication applications from server based technologies to network based 'Peer-to-Peer' technologies, such as File transfer Protocols' (FTP). In contrast to centralised server based technologies, in peer-to-peer technologies, the strength of the communication system depends on the number and capacity of the peers who subscribe to it. The distributed nature of these technologies means that they tend to be more robust than server based technologies and more difficult to monitor.

In many ways the existence of the Internet challenges traditional notions of the mass media, particularly those espoused in critical media theory. Unlike other forms of mass communication, no one group is responsible for the Internet's administration (Jones, 1998). Instead, it is managed via several not-for-profit governing organizations, with day-to-day maintenance undertaken by a range of for-profit companies, telecommunications industry agencies and computer networking companies. As such, with a minimum of skill and access to the appropriate technology, literally anyone can post, send or create any application, message or image they desire. Rather than a means for controlling the dissemination of information in the interests of a political or economic elite, the Internet is perceived as providing the opportunity for anyone to have a say. For this reason the

Internet is seen by many to be a ‘borderless utopia of unending possibility’ or, at the very least, a medium of significant social and educational value (Barak and Fisher, 2001; Jones, 1998; Turkle, 1995).

In contrast to socially constructive views of the Internet, however, a number of commentators have expressed concern about the ongoing development and availability of the medium (Durkin and Bryant, 1995; Griffiths, 2001; Van Gelder, 1985, cited in Cooper, Scherer, Boies, and Gordon, 1999; Zickmund, 1997). These individuals and agencies point to the more subversive possibilities offered by the Internet’s apparently limitless scope for distribution of information. In particular, they emphasise that the Internet provides the means for individuals interested in committing criminal acts to trade relevant information, create alliances, and access potential victims. Their concerns are not unwarranted. The sheer size of the Internet makes it very difficult to know, let alone control exactly what is available at any one time. This is compounded by the fact that the associated networks cross national boundaries and legal jurisdictions and include productions in multiple languages and from multiple cultures (Lewis, 2004). Furthermore, the nature of Internet based interaction provides users with relative anonymity, and attracts a high proportion of users skilled in the development of means to electronically protect information. As stated by McGrath and Casey (2002, p88) “the privacy, immediacy and transient nature of [Internet based activities] make them particularly conducive to criminal activity.”

Crime on the Internet

The very aspects of the Internet that make it conducive to subversive, criminal and anti-social use also serve to prevent estimation of the extent to which such activities occur within the on-line¹ environment. However, there is no doubt that such activity occurs. One need look no further than the news media of the past decade to obtain evidence for this statement and to realise the diversity of illegal and illicit functions that the Internet may serve (see McGrath and Casey, 2002). Similarly, within academic literature, documented cases include incidents of unauthorised computer access, computer vandalism, identity and funds fraud, the sale of contraband, Internet gambling, money laundering, distribution of hate propaganda, drug and explosives recipes, cyber-terrorism, denial of service attacks, cyberstalking, accessing and grooming children and young people for sexual purposes, accessing victims for sexual crimes, violent crimes and homicide, accessing and distributing child pornography, and networking of individuals involved in planning or enacting terrorism and organised crime (Bargh, 2002; Durkin and Bryant, 1995; Feather, 1999; Lewis, 2004). Of course, none of these activities are peculiar to the Internet and in most cases their enactment on the Internet does not differ qualitatively from their enactment in other realms of human existence. Whether on line or in the street, fraud and scams still involve the intentional deception of others, vandalism still involves the wilful destruction of another's property, the formation of criminal and terrorist networks still involves communication between interested parties, and accessing victims for sexual and physical crimes still involves the offender making contact with a

¹ The word 'on-line' is used to denote activities occurring through electronic connection to the Internet. In turn, the word 'off-line' refers to activities occurring in the absence of this connection.

suitable candidate and ‘luring’ them to an appropriate venue. Indeed, the most surprising aspect of cyber crime may well be the fact that society appears surprised by it.

History has shown time and time again that criminal and/or deviant human behaviour is particularly adaptable to societal and technological changes (Durkin and Bryant, 1995; Feather, 1999). For instance, the introduction of the motor vehicle was closely followed by its use in the commission of robbery, homicide and assault, the telephone is frequently employed as part of harassment and stalking strategies and, more recently pre-paid mobile telephones have been identified as an effective means of both activating explosive devices and preventing the tracing of phone-calls regarding ransom demands. Indeed, it is arguable that adaptability is a necessary component of some forms of deviant behaviour, particularly those that specifically react against, manipulate or exploit mainstream structures, beliefs and systems. In order to remain ‘underground’, individuals practicing such behaviours must keep pace with the terrain or risk being exposed as the ground above them moves away. Furthermore, in many cases, adaptation to such social and technological changes may actually increase the opportunities to commit offences.

The Use of New Technologies to Distribute ‘Objectionable Material’

Child Pornography: Public, Media, Legal and International Concerns

During the past decade, significant public concern has focused on use of the Internet in the commission of offences against children (Schmidt, 2002; Jenkins, 2001). To some degree this concern has responded directly to news media accounts that sensationalise the

likelihood of such offences, portraying the medium as primarily populated by 'paedophiles'. The fear instilled by this type of reporting has led to a host of initiatives designed to police and prevent the opportunities that the Internet provides for individuals to access children for illegal purposes. These have involved public education programs in which children and young people are made aware of the dangers of providing personal information to or meeting someone with whom they have only interacted on the Internet, parents and teachers are taught how to monitor and guide children's safe Internet use, and law enforcement agencies undertaking operations in which they pose as children on the Internet in an effort to detect potential offenders before offences are committed.

While it is true that individuals who are attracted to children have used the Internet to access young people for sexual purposes (see Finkelhor, Mitchell and Wolak, 2000; Lewis, 2004; McGrath and Casey, 2002; McLaughlin, 2000) many of the cases reported by the media do not involve actual physical contact between offenders and children. In these cases, the word paedophile is used indiscriminately to describe any person who demonstrates an interest in the sexualization of children, regardless of what motivates this interest. By default, this definition extends to those who use the Internet to access sexualised stories and images of children (commonly referred to as child pornography). In many cases, this lack of distinction may be seen to arise from assumptions about the use of such material and the abuse of individuals similar to those portrayed in it. In legal terms, however, perhaps the most important association between child pornography and physical abuse is the fact that images of child pornography may be seen as evidence of physical offences against children. In most cases reported in the media, the abuse referred

to was not actually committed by the person prosecuted for possessing the material in question.

The media may not discriminate between individuals who use the Internet to access children for the purpose of engaging them in sexually abusive activities and those who use it to access images of children being subjected to sexually abuse, but the law does. This distinction is important because it impacts on the way in which criminal justice and law enforcement agencies investigate and respond to individuals involved in either activity. However, while law enforcement and criminal justice activities have benefited from a significant amount of research concerning the social and behavioural correlates of child sexual abuse, much less is known about the social and behavioural correlates of accessing and distributing material portraying this abuse. Indeed, much of what is known has been focused on the effects of such behaviour and the relationship between the consumption of child pornography and the sexual abuse of children, as opposed to the behaviour itself. This orientation, and the assumptions that underpin it, albeit important, do not assist in the detection or judicial treatment of those involved in accessing child pornography or their treatment.

As will be discussed in the following chapters, the lack of knowledge regarding the social and behavioural correlates associated with the use of material portraying the sexualisation of children may be at least partially due to the apparent paucity of public accessibility to such material prior to the introduction of the Internet. The increased salience of this type of material on the Internet has lead, not only to increased questions regarding the

association between such use and child sexual abuse, but also to questions about individual involvement in accessing this type of material in the absence of any apparent physical offences occurring. This last question is of particular concern in terms of the sentencing of individuals involved in these activities.

In addition to increasing the visibility of child pornography, the rise of the Internet has also highlighted the behaviour of individuals involved in accessing and distributing material portraying other forms of abuse, such as that portraying violent or degrading activity. Recent media and research evidence suggests that, as opposed to being the focus of an individual's Internet activity, the collection of child pornography may occur as part of accessing this other type of material (Carr, 2004). This evidence, together with that pertaining to individuals who access child pornography in the absence of any evidence of physical abuse occurring, infers the need for a greater understanding of the variability of such involvement.

This Thesis

This thesis aims to determine whether individual differences in the use of the Internet to access material portraying sexual and physical exploitation and degradation are related to individual differences in the likelihood of further offence behaviour and/or increased seriousness and intensity of offence behaviour. It will also seek to identify potential reasons for individual differences in the use of the Internet during the process of accessing material portraying sexual and physical exploitation and degradation.

In order to achieve these goals, this thesis will present research examining variations in the social and behavioural correlates of a sample of individuals who were identified as using the Internet to satisfy an interest in material portraying sexual and physical exploitation and degradation. The way in which these social and behavioural variables interact with Internet technology during the commission of associated offences will then be explored.

The data used in this thesis were collected during the author's employment as a research officer to the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs. It was generated through collaboration between the author and staff of the New Zealand Censorship Compliance Unit (CCU). For the purpose of the current research, the data were reanalysed to test a range of hypotheses developed from the research literature and theoretical models reviewed in the following chapters.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter One reviews the issue of child pornography and discusses the legal, social and moral grounds upon which access to and distribution of related media is criminalized. Within the context of this review, the relationship between child pornography and other material portraying abuse and degradation is described. Legislation from a range of jurisdictions is presented and analysed to demonstrate the common assumptions underlying the criminalisation of child pornography and the criminalisation of other media content. This is complemented by an overview of the academic research literature concerning the social and personal effects of consuming related material. The findings arising from this research are then used to

identify the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement as a theoretical model within which ongoing investigation may proceed. Research specifically related to the application of this theoretical model is reviewed.

Chapter Two introduces the Internet as a means for accessing the type of material described in chapter one. Changes to relevant legislation that have occurred in response to the employment of this medium are reviewed as a means of highlighting issues associated with its use. These issues include the need to re-examine the grounds for criminalizing media that portrays abusive activity, the changing nature of such material, and increased opportunities for activities associated with the use of such material. Research concerning the way in which individuals use the Internet to access media that portrays abusive activity and the social implications of this activity is also reviewed. Given that most such research has oriented towards understanding the use and effects of child pornography, analysis of the literature is largely focused on this issue. However, in order to generalise this literature to the process of accessing other types of material, literature regarding the use of non-criminalized media content and related research is also discussed. In amalgam, the results of this research is used to highlight limitations in the application of the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement to the issue of Internet based access to illegal media content.

Chapter Three identifies the relationship between the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement and criminological theories concerning the way in which social relationships influence criminal behaviour. It discusses the way in which concepts

underpinning the Theory of Age Graded Social Control may be applied to the Uses and Gratifications model to gain a greater understanding of how social processes interact both within and external to the Internet environment to influence the nature of an individual's involvement with abusive media content. In considering these influences, the discussion also acknowledges the potential for different off-line social experiences to manifest different orientations to on-line social behaviours. This potential is explained using Narrative Theory, with specific reference to the concept of Interpersonal Coherence. Subsequently, a model integrating the theories considered during the introductory chapters of this thesis is provided, showing how each theory may be used to explain different processes impacting on individual involvement in accessing objectionable material.

In response to hypotheses generated on the basis of the theoretical model presented in Chapter Three, Chapter Four provides a conceptual framework that includes measures of offence involvement and clarification of the types of on and off-line networks in which Internet censorship offenders may participate. It also describes the way in which data were collected and analysed to explore the social and behavioural patterns hypothesised in chapter three, and discusses the strengths and limitations of the dataset used. This discussion provides grounds for the types of analyses undertaken.

Chapter Five provides the results of analyses undertaken to explore the relationship between on-line social involvement and the range of offence and offence related activities in which individual offenders were found to engage. In turn, Chapter Six provides the

results of analyses investigating associations between off-line relationships and offence related activities, while Chapter Seven examines associations between off-line relationships and on-line social interaction. Finally, Chapter Eight draws together the results of these analyses and the findings of the current research are compared to the hypotheses and theoretical model developed in chapter three. These are discussed in terms of research and policy implications and potential use in law enforcement, crime prevention and justice administration practices.

Chapter 1: Objectionable Material

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC), child pornography is a violation against children. The UNCRC mandate requires that the 193 nations who are party to the convention take measures to prevent the exploitative use of children in pornographic materials. As a result, in most jurisdictions in Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, activity associated with this type of material is subject to legal prohibitions (International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, 2006). The national legislation of each of these countries generally conforms with the legislation of the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) in that it defines “the visual depiction of the sexual exploitation of a child, focussing on the child’s sexual behaviour or genitals” as an offence (cited in Healy, 1996, p. 2). However, the relatively abstract nature of this definition (specifically the potential ambiguity of what constitutes the visual depiction of sexual exploitation) combined with differences in the legal definition of childhood, has resulted in a wide range of different interpretations at the local level. Furthermore, individual nations also differ in terms of the type of depictions that they consider illegal (eg. possession, distribution, production, supply, exhibition etc).

International Legislation and Grounds for Prosecution

In many cases laws against child pornography are part of broader legislation regulating, limiting or prohibiting the possession, production and distribution of media products (eg. films, videos, publications) that portray specific themes and activities that are judged to

be ‘injurious to the public good’. This type of legislation is not uncommon. Indeed, in addition to child pornography, the possession and/or production and/or distribution of certain other types of media is prohibited or controlled by law (as interpreted by classification codes and guidelines) in countries including the UK, Finland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Norway, Singapore, Iceland, Denmark, the Netherlands, India, Mexico, China, the European Union, France, Germany, Malaysia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Sweden. Such prohibited media material (including child pornography) is variously referred to as “objectionable”, “offensive”, “indecent”, “obscene”, and often identified by the rating “RC” or “refused classification” within national media classification guidelines².

For instance, the Australian classification guidelines which are used to interpret the National Classification Code set out in the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 specifically states that publications will be refused classification if they:

- (a) Promote or provide instruction in paedophile activity, or if they contain:
- (b) Descriptions or depictions of child sexual abuse or any other exploitative or offensive descriptions or depictions involving a person who is or who looks like a child under 16;
- (c) Detailed instruction in (i) matters of crime or violence and/or (ii) the use of proscribed drugs;

² Unless referring to specific legislation, in the remainder of this document, the word “objectionable” will be used to denote all such material.

- (d) Realistic depictions of bestiality;
- Gratuitous, exploitative or offensive descriptions or depictions of (e) violence with a very high degree of impact which are excessively frequent, emphasised or detailed; (f) cruelty or real violence which are very detailed or which have a high impact; (g) sexual violence; (h) sexualised nudity involving minors; (i) sexual activity involving minors;
- Exploitative descriptions or depictions of (j) violence in a sexual context; (k) sexual activity accompanied by fetishes or practices which are revolting or abhorrent; (l) incest fantasies or other fantasies which are offensive or revolting or abhorrent.

Similarly, under most circumstances in New Zealand, films videos and publications containing the following themes are prohibited:

- The exploitation of children, or young persons, or both, for sexual purposes; or
- The use of violence or coercion to compel any person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct; or
- Sexual conduct with or upon the body of a dead person; or
- The use of urine or excrement in association with degrading or dehumanising conduct or sexual conduct; or
- Bestiality; or
- Acts of torture or the infliction of extreme violence or extreme cruelty.

(Section 3.2; New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993)

Within this framework, particular attention is paid to whether the media product:

- Describes, depicts, or otherwise deals with (i) Acts of torture, the infliction of serious physical harm, or acts of significant cruelty, (ii) Sexual violence or sexual coercion, or violence or coercion in association with sexual conduct (iii) Other sexual or physical conduct of a degrading or dehumanising or demeaning nature (iv) Sexual conduct with or by children, or young persons, or both, (v) Physical conduct in which sexual satisfaction is derived from inflicting or suffering cruelty or pain.
- Degrades or dehumanises or demeans any person.
- Promotes or encourages criminal acts or acts of terrorism.
- Represents (whether directly or by implication) that members of any particular class of the public are inherently inferior to other members of the public by reason of any characteristic of members of that class, being a characteristic that is a prohibited ground of discrimination specified in section 21 (1) of the Human Rights Act 1993.

(Section 3.3; New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993)

Section 163 of the Canadian Criminal Code 1985 prohibits “any publication, a dominant characteristic of which is undue exploitation of sex or sex and any of the following subjects, namely crime, horror, cruelty and violence”. The Criminal Code 1985 states that, “generally, any material will be considered obscene, and therefore illegal, if it contains sex coupled with violence; exploitative sex that degrades or dehumanises any person, male or female; or explicitly sexual material that employs children in its production”. Likewise, under the Video Recordings Act 1984 the British Board of Film

Classification guidelines³ require that all explicit sexual acts shown in videos (including sexual intercourse and oral sex) must be legal and consensual and videos are not legally allowed to portray:

- Any material which is in breach of the criminal law;
- Material likely to encourage an interest in abusive sexual activity (e.g. paedophilia, incest) which may include depictions involving adults role-playing as non-adults;
- The portrayal of any sexual activity, whether real or simulated, which involves lack of consent;
- The use of any form of physical restraint which prevents participants from withdrawing consent;
- The infliction of pain or physical harm, real or (in a sexual context) simulated; some allowance may be made for mild consensual activity
- Any sexual threats or humiliation which do not form part of a clearly consenting role-playing game;
- Penetration by any object likely to cause actual harm or associated with violence;
- Activity which is degrading or dehumanising (e.g. bestiality, necrophilia)

As evident from the content of the legislation presented above, with the exception of child pornography, the subject of what is considered legally objectionable media often differs between jurisdictions. In ‘non-Western’ states, these differences tend to be even

³ <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/> (23/07/05)

more profound. For instance, in China⁴, Regulations on the Administration of Publishing 2001 state that “no publication may contain...contents...harming the honour or the interests of the nation; [or]...disturbing social order, disrupting social stability. In turn, the Notice Regarding Further Strengthening the Administration of Periodicals Relating to Current Affairs and Politics, General Lifestyle, Information Tabloids and Scientific Theory 2000 prohibits material “gainsaying the leadership of Marxism, Mao Zedong thought, Deng Xiaoping theory;... jeopardising the interests of the nation; ...influencing social stability; ...propagating superstition, pseudo-science or incorrect teachings; ...spreading rumours, producing and distributing false news, interfering in the broader work of the party or the nation;...otherwise violating the propaganda discipline of the party or violating the regulations administering the nations publishing”⁵. Similarly, although Article 48 of The Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt⁶ states that censorship of newspapers, publications and mass media may only occur in a state of emergency or during a time of war, and only in relation to matters of public safety or natural security in accordance with the law; in 2005 Egyptian authorities had maintained a ‘state of emergency’ for 24 years⁷. Under state of emergency laws, the Egyptian “Ministry of Defence may ban works about sensitive security issues” and the “Council of Ministers may order the banning of works that it deems offensive to public morals, detrimental to religion, or likely to cause a breach of the peace”⁸. According to

⁴ China and Egypt were chosen as examples because they represent examples of Asian and Arab states, and as such cultures that are clearly distinct from their ‘Western’ counterparts, yet demonstrate strong administrative systems that enable legal comparison with Western states.

⁵ See Congressional Executive Commission on China: <http://www.cecc.gov> (21/07/05).

⁶ Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt 1971, 1980

⁷ <http://www.middle-east-on-line.com/english/?id=13207>

⁸ <http://pcmlp.socleg.ox.ac.uk/transition/issue07/egypt.htm>

representatives at the Beacon for Freedom Conference 2004⁹, guidelines regarding these laws prevent foreign newspapers from:

- Reporting on human rights abuses
- Criticising the president or his family
- Criticising the military
- Pointing out the ill-treatment of Egyptians in ‘friendly’ Arab countries, especially in Saudi Arabia .
- Discussing modern, unorthodox interpretations of Islam.
- Reporting discrimination against Coptic Christians.

While the subject of media censorship law may differ dramatically between countries, commonalities do exist in terms of the purpose of such law. Specifically, most media legislation prohibits the portrayal of interpersonal acts and sexual practices that if actually performed would be considered illegal, criminal, or contrary to the human rights legislation of the country involved. Given that a country’s law generally reflects its ideal social order, it is not surprising that where such order is identified with the observation of political or religious ideals as opposed to the maintenance of individual rights, media legislation will also reflect these ideals.

In line with the consistent alignment of definitions of objectionable media with the portrayal of activities that, if enacted might threaten the social order of the nation

⁹ http://www.bibalex.org/beaconforfreedom/newsletter.htm#_Toc69706678

involved, most media legislation of this nature also demonstrates consistency in advocating that decisions regarding the legality of a media item be based on the degree to which that item is found to promote or support the activities portrayed. For instance, in Australia, the National Classification Code (Federal Register of Legislative Instruments F2005L01284) explicitly prohibits media that promotes, incites or instructs in matters of crime or violence. Similarly, in New Zealand, the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 states that “a publication shall be deemed to be objectionable ... if [it] promotes or supports, or tends to promote or support” those activities identified in Section 3.2 of the Act. In the UK, the Obscene Publications Act 1959, 1964 states that “an article shall be deemed to be obscene if its' effect or (where the article comprises two or more distinct items) the effect of any one of its' items is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it.” In the Egyptian legislation identified above, specific reference is made to material encouraging behaviours that may breach the peace and religious status quo.

The wording of these examples of media legislation implies that material will be defined as ‘objectionable’ where it is perceived to encourage others to support or enact the activities being portrayed and where such support or enactment is perceived to be socially harmful. However, decisions made on the basis of these concepts are obviously prone to biases in interpretation and the arguments behind them are frequently subjective and limited in terms of generalisability (eg. What public? Promote to whom?). Such arguments tend to be based on causal attributions about the relationship between

exposure to the material and the commission of acts similar to those portrayed by the material. These attributions assume that exposure to objectionable material will lead individuals to commit the acts portrayed in that material, and/or make the public more accepting of these acts.

Media Effects

The concept of negative effects arising from exposure to objectionable media appears to form the basis of most restrictions on activities associated with this type of media. However, the legislation varies in terms of its conceptualisation of what these effects may be. In some cases it suggests that viewing objectionable media may encourage behaviour consistent with the activities portrayed in that media, while in others it merely infers an increase in support for such activities or an increase in negative emotional response to it. For instance, the Australian legislation extends the concept of promoting criminal activities to the promotion of activities that are considered “revolting or abhorrent” (Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995). Similarly, the UK legislation (Obscene Publications Act 1959, 1964) identifies the potential for objectionable material to “offend” a reasonable person.

The differences in legal conceptualisations of the potential effects of viewing ‘objectionable’ media content mirror the differences in social science conceptualisations of the same phenomenon. Research focused on assessing the impact of specific types of media content on viewers has generated a wide range of hypotheses but yielded very few definitive answers (see Savage, 2004; Freedman, 2002; Marshall, 2000; Bauserman, 1996; for comprehensive reviews). Furthermore, given the wide range of activities that, if

portrayed by the media could legally be identified as objectionable, together with the difficulties associated with operationalising the qualitative distinctions implicit in their definition, such research has tended to focus on very broad themes and stereotypical behaviours (Barker, 1997; Gauntlett, 1998; Vine, 1997). This focus has included consideration of the associations between (an ill defined concept of) violence portrayed in the media (usually television or video) and personal aggression, with specific emphasis on how such portrayals affect children (Barker, 1997). In addition, research has been undertaken to assess the impact that viewing both violent and non violent pornography has on adult males, and to identify relationships between the consumption of such material and the commission of violent and/or sexual offences.

Theoretical Perspectives

Given the frequent lack of a theoretical framework for media effects research (Gauntlett, 1998; Seto, Maric and Barbaree, 2001), it is difficult to assess the relationship between the results of research considering violent media and research considering pornographic media. Generally, meta-analyses and reviews of media effects research are more likely to include reference to theoretical perspectives than the research itself. In meta-analyses and reviews of research considering both violent media and sexually explicit media, theoretical discussion frequently refers to processes of social learning, conditioning and arousal/excitation transfer, (Anderson, Berkowitz, Donnerstein, Huesmann, Johnson, Linz, Malamuth and Wartella, 2003; Bandura, 1994; Bandura, 1977; Bauserman, 1996; Bryant and Thompson, 2002; Malamuth, Addison and Koss, 2000; Seto, Maric and Barbaree, 2001; Vine, 1997;).

Classical and operant conditioning models of media effects focus on the reinforcing nature of the media content to those who consume it (Seto, Maric, and Barbaree, 2001). In the case of sexually explicit material in particular, it is suggested that if consumption is accompanied by masturbation to orgasm, consumers sexual response to the scenes/events depicted is reinforced and they will be more attracted to such scenes/events on future occasions. In the case of media violence, autonomic arousal resulting from the viewing of such depictions and/or reinforcement of the violence by co-consumers may be seen as mechanisms of direct behavioural reinforcement.

Social learning perspectives also draw on the concept of reinforcement, albeit less directly. Social learning proponents suggest that the mass media may influence consumers to behave in certain ways by modelling specific types of behaviour and providing information suggesting that such behaviour is more likely to be associated with valued rewards than other types of behaviour (Malamuth, Addison, and Koss, 2000; Seto, Maric, and Barbaree, 2001). Social learning theory specifies that media is more likely to influence behaviour if consumers identify with the protagonists and/or situational context portrayed in the media depiction.

In contrast to both conditioning and social learning perspectives, proponents of excitation transfer theories of media effects suggest that modelling and reinforcement have minimal impact on consumer's responses to media content (Allen, Emmers, Gebhardt, and Giery, 1995; Seto, Maric, and Barbaree, 2001). Excitation transfer theory is based on the idea that "the experience of emotions depends on [both] autonomic arousal and cognitive

interpretation of the arousal state” and that “people rely on external rather than internal cues to distinguish and label specific emotions” (Seto, Maric, and Barbaree, 2001, pp. 38). Application of excitation transfer theory to media effects research suggests that subjective experiences of physiological arousal resulting from the experience of viewing violence or pornography may lead to aggressive behaviour if the viewer is subsequently provoked because the provocation leads the viewer to attribute their state of arousal to anger.

Meta-analyses and reviews of media effects research suggest that social learning and excitation transfer theories may hold more promise for the future of media effects research than conditioning models (Allen, Emmers, Gebhardt, and Giery, 1995; Malamuth, Addison, and Koss, 2000; Seto, Maric, and Barbaree, 2001). However, the mechanisms described by each of these models are quite distinct and very little of the research reviewed in the following sections has explicitly tested either of these theory's. Nevertheless, given that all of the theories appear equally applicable (at least conceptually) to the study of both violent media and sexually explicit media it seems reasonable to assume that the processes of arousal, social learning and conditioning operate independently of the type of media content involved. Therefore, the following overview of the research literature will consider, in tandem, the findings of investigations focused on the effects of exposure to pornography and on the effects of exposure to violent or ‘antisocial’ media content. It is also assumed that the findings of media effects research may be generalised to the viewing of any type of media content, at least in terms of the way that media effects are seen to influence media consumers. Given the vast

number of research initiatives undertaken in the area of media effects over the past 50 or so years, this overview is by no means comprehensive, but rather draws out the main features of the literature that is relevant to the current thesis.

Overview of the Media Effects Research to Date

Generally, media effects research has failed to conclusively demonstrate that violent or sexual media content, consumed in a natural environment, leads individuals to commit violent or sexual acts that they would not otherwise have engaged in (Bauserman, 1996; Davis and Bauserman, 1993; Freedman, 2002; Graham, 2001; Savage, 2004; Vine, 1997). Studies that do suggest such an effect are commonly criticised on the basis of poor theoretical structure, weak methodology, artificial contexts, and failure to adequately define the issue under consideration (Barker, 1997; Freedman, 2002, Gauntlett, 1998; Rowland, 1997; Savage, 2004). However, the media effects research has yielded some support for a relationship between consumption of violent or pornographic media and cognitive indicators associated with aggression and/or acceptance of aggressive acts (Anderson et al, 2003). The findings of research examining these indicators suggests that media violence may desensitise people to real violence (Linz, Donnerstein, and Penrod, 1988; Molitor and Hirsch, 1994), and that individuals who view a high level of media violence overestimate the actual level of violence within society (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli, 1994; Ward and Rivadenyra, 1999). They also suggest that individuals who view high levels of pornography overestimate popularity of the sexual practises portrayed in this material (Harris, 1994; Schneider, 2000a), and that exposure to media violence can lead to both short and long term fear responses in children

(Buckingham, 1996; Owens, 1999; Singer, Slovak, Frierson and York, 1998; Van der Voot, 1986, cited in Freedman, 2002; Vine; 1997).

Experimentally controlled media effects research, undertaken in artificial environments has also demonstrated that exposure to violent media may “prime” associated aggressive thoughts and feelings (Anderson et al, 2003). During an experimentally controlled free association exercise, Bushman (1998) found that after exposure to a violent video (a 15 minute clip involving the development of tension resulting in a physical fight scene) individuals were more likely to generate words with an aggressive meaning than after exposure to a non-violent video (a 15 minute clip involving the development of tension but no fight scene). In a similarly controlled lexical decision experiment he reported that those subjects who viewed a violent video demonstrated faster reaction times to words with aggressive meanings than those who viewed a non-violent video.

The concept of priming is a well recognised cognitive phenomenon and has been shown to influence the attributions that individuals make about the behaviour of others and their subsequent behaviour towards them. For instance, under experimental conditions Bargh and Pietromonaco (1982) covertly exposed a randomly assigned group of subjects to words that were semantically associated with the concept of hostility. They found that individuals in this experimental condition went on to provide more negative evaluations of a target individual than individuals in the control condition who were not exposed to the hostile word list. In a conceptually similar study (Jo and Berkowitz, 1994) found that male subjects who were familiarised with a so called “boy-meets-girl” story smiled more,

talked more, leaned forward more, and gazed at a female research confederate than those who were exposed to another type of story. It is argued that the more accessible a cognitive construct (such as aggression or attraction) is to an individual the more likely they will base their behaviour on its expression (e.g., Betancourt and Blair, 1992; Dodge and Crick, 1990; Ferguson and Rule, 1983; Salzer Burks, Laird, Dodge, Pettit and Bates, 1999; Weiner, 1995). Bushman (1998; p. 1) suggests “habitual exposure to violent media may ... reduce viewers' inhibitions against aggression”. Similarly, Harris (1994) suggests that frequent exposure to erotic material may disinhibit individuals such that they are more likely to engage in sexual experimentation. However, there is very little research evidence to support these contentions. Furthermore, both of these analyses infer the process of expressing behaviours that have previously been repressed. As such, they imply that the possibility of such behaviour existed prior to the media experience.

Predispositions

Gauntlett (1998) suggests that one of the primary faults of media effects research has been that it ignores the importance of individual selection of media content and assumes that all individuals will be equally affected by exposure to violent media. As stated by McQuail (2000, p87) and reinforced by the conclusions of Thomas and Wyatt (1999), a specific medium can only be effective if it is “taken up, developed and applied.” Furthermore, in line with the much earlier conclusion formed by Katz (1959, cited in Rubin 2002, p527) a specific medium will only be taken up, developed and applied if an individual has use for it and if it serves their existing requirements.

Amongst both media effects proponents and critics, there appears to be a general consensus that the process of an individual selecting violent media is indicative of a pre-existing interest in the associated violent or pornographic subject matter (eg. Bogaert, 2001; Davis and Bauserman, 1993; Malamuth, Addison and Koss, 2000; Marshall, 2000; Gauntlett, 1998; Seto, Maric and Barbaree, 2001; Vine, 1997). In what has been heralded as one of the most ecologically valid studies in the media effects field, Bogaert (1993; cited in Fisher and Barak, 2001; see also Bogaert, 2001) offered a sample of male undergraduate students (who were already participating in another study) the opportunity to take part in research that would involve them viewing their choice of a range of videos, and would provide them with additional experimental credit towards their university course. Before agreeing to participate, potential subjects were invited to confidentially select the video that they would like to watch. Videos offered for selection included the depiction of a non-sexual talk show, 'common' sexual acts, 'novel' sexual acts, female sexual insatiability, sexual violence and child pornography. Bogaert found that more than half (51 percent) of those who were offered the opportunity to participate in this study declined. As their reasons for declining to participate, individuals stated that they either didn't need the credit or were not interested in any of the videos on offer. Furthermore, of those who agreed to participate in the study, very few selected sexually violent material (4%) or child pornography (3 percent).

As identified in various overviews of media effects research (eg. Anderson et al, 2003; Bushman, 1995; Freedman, 2002; Malamuth, Addison and Koss, 2000), the relationship between exhibiting aggressive or anti-social behaviour and consuming violent or

antisocial media, appears to be bi-directional. That is, aggressive people are more likely to watch violence, and people who watch violence are more likely to be aggressive (Seto, Maric and Barbaree, 2001). Similarly, erotophilic men have been found to enjoy pornographic media more than erotophobic men (Lopez and George, 1995). These findings suggest that any effects resulting from high levels of exposure to such material may actually reflect a predisposition towards associated thoughts and behaviours. Indeed, research has demonstrated that individuals who are predisposed to violent behaviours or have demonstrated a history of violent behaviours respond differently to pornography and media violence than others. As identified by Allen et al (1995) in comparison to control subjects, men who have committed criminal sexual offences are more aroused by sexually explicit material that contains violence than by that which does not. Furthermore, following a meta-analysis of the reactions of criminal offenders to pornography Allen, D'Alessio and Emmers-Sommer (2000) concluded that this population was more likely than non-criminal populations to engage in sexual activity (including masturbation, consensual and non-consensual sexual intercourse) after viewing any type of pornographic material.

Such differences have also been demonstrated in priming studies. In research involving the subliminal priming of clinically identified 'sexually aggressive' and 'non aggressive' men, Bargh, Raymond, Pryor and Strack (1995) observed that sexually aggressive men were more likely to associate power related words with sexual concepts. In turn, Zurbriggen (2000) found that higher levels of sexual aggression amongst men were predicted by stronger associations between sexual words and words relating to concepts

of power. It is therefore suggested that media portrayals of physical and sexual violence may simply serve to reinforce the behaviour of already aggressive people. Gerbner et al (1994) offer a similar view in their conclusion that:

Television serves to reinforce what is learned outside the television situation (pp. 7)

The results of priming research suggests that priming effects are most profound for those with a strong view or orientation towards the issue under consideration. A recent study involving the media presentation of political issues to samples of ‘evangelical Christians’ and control groups of *randomly selected* university undergraduate students showed that the exact nature of constructs primed by media exposure and subsequent evaluations of political candidates, were significantly influenced by the values and political attitudes of the individuals viewing the material (Domke, Shah, and Wackman, 1998). The researchers interpreted these results as suggesting that individuals with more integrated cognitive frameworks, identified in terms of clear linkages between specific individual values and political views, are more likely to demonstrate “clearly patterned and predictable priming effects” than those who do not bring such biases to the viewing arena. In contrast, individuals with less structured cognitive frameworks were found to be significantly more influenced by the contextual framing of the media message under consideration.

These findings infer that the way in which media presentations affect the thoughts, feelings and associated behaviour of an individual depend on the degree to which that individual has considered and evaluated other issues related to the concept being presented. As suggested by Malamuth, Addison and Koss (2000), where an individual has already identified violence as an acceptable means of personal expression, violent media will indeed reinforce that evaluation. However, where such expression has been previously evaluated as unacceptable, the media presentation of violent activity will have the opposite effect. This may explain why those individuals who conduct research into the media effects of violence and pornography, and by nature are exposed to high levels of associated stimuli, do not appear to experience significant adverse behavioural effects from their experiences¹⁰. It is also consistent with research showing that family attitudes to media violence are more predictive of effects resulting from exposure to such media than the amount or nature of the media consumed.

Environmental Influences

Despite significant variations in the results of research examining the relationship between media violence and violent behaviour, and the methodological problems inherent in many such studies, one finding that is consistently identified in naturalist or longitudinal studies is that family attitudes and influences are a much more important determinant of violent or aggressive behaviour than media images (Freedman, 2002; Gunter, 1994; Huesmann and Bacharach, 1988; Vine, 1997). These influences appear to interact directly with media content, such that individuals who identify with media

¹⁰ Indeed, given the pervasiveness of violent imagery in mainstream media, and the high levels of media consumption recorded in most western societies (Anderson et al, 2003), it also explains why not everyone in these societies adopts violence as an interpersonal control strategy.

portrayals appear more likely to be affected by them (Paik and Comstock, 1994). As stated by Brown (1996, p. 2), “violence in the media may contribute to violent crime, but is not a single cause, because there are many other variables which contribute to violent behaviour”.

In an investigation into the television viewing patterns of 20 ‘at risk’ Norwegian boys Gunter (1994) found that aggressive behaviour was more strongly predicted by a lack of parental rules regulating viewing behaviour than by the amount of television violence consumed. Similarly, research concerning parent involvement in their children’s television viewing behaviour has shown that when parents restrict the types of television programs viewed by their children, and/or make negative comments regarding the content of television programs featuring ‘socially undesirable’ content (including violent resolution of issues and promotion of alcohol drinking behaviour), children are less likely to respond to such content in a way that supports anti-social or undesirable behaviour (Austin, Pinkleton and Fujioka, 2000; Nathanson, 1999). When parents respond positively to programs containing content of this nature, the opposite is observed (Austin, Pinkleton and Fujioka, 2000). Furthermore, in some cases it would appear that, in the absence of any discussion regarding program content, the simple act of parents co-viewing antisocial material with their children may result in children responding more positively to such content (Nathanson, 1999). Nathanson (1999) suggests that children interpret their parents’ uncritical co-viewing of antisocial material as an indication that the material is worth watching and therefore orient positively towards it. Family communication and control factors have also been shown to influence both the type of

media chosen by individual children, and the way in which they interpret the activities portrayed in that media (Krcmar, 1998).

As stated by Krcmar (1998) children initially learn how to interpret and perceive their environment through interactions with and control exerted by other members of their family. The way in which media is interpreted has been shown to influence the effects it has on individual attitudes and behaviour. Research has demonstrated that violent media portrayals that are perceived by the viewer as justified, acceptable, pleasing, without consequences, realistic and associated with circumstances with which the viewer identifies (or committed by a character with whom the viewer identifies) are more likely to contribute to the development of positive attitudes towards aggression on the part of the viewer (Brown, 1996). However, the research literature has also shown that two individuals can consume the same piece of media and one can interpret it positively while another does not. Interpretation of media in a way that justifies or glorifies violent content appears to be mediated by social and family circumstances such as violence or abuse in the home, lack of parental influence, poverty, health, education, racism, cultural disintegration, and substance abuse (for example: Brown, 1996; Freedman, 1994; Gaziano, 2001; Seigal, 1992; Palermo, 1995; Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1995).

In research considering the interactive effects of exposure to real world violence and frequent exposure to media violence, Gunter (1994) found that boys who experienced both conditions demonstrated an increased likelihood to “use violent media images to create and consolidate their identities as members of an antisocial or marginalised

group". This pattern of behaviour was interpreted as indicative of an interactive relationship between media and real world violence. Indeed, Malamuth, Addison and Koss (2000) suggest that the effects of exposure to violent media are likely to depend on a complex array of personal conditions, including cultural background milieu, home background, personality characteristics, specific content of the media stimuli, and environment in which exposure to that stimuli occurs and the emotional state of the individual at the time of exposure. As many of these factors reflect transient states rather than permanent traits, it would appear that effects may only occur if conditions are 'optimal'. This suggestion goes some way to explaining the conflicting nature of the results of some media effects research. While research undertaken by Malamuth, Addison and Koss (2000) demonstrated an association between higher levels of sexual media consumption and higher levels of aggressive sexual expression amongst male individuals whose individual personality characteristics (associated with family background variables and cultural milieu) interacted in such a way as to 'predispose' them to sexually aggressive behaviour, it also highlighted the fact that not all individuals who are predisposed to sexual aggression use high levels of sexual media.

Gauntlett (1998) is critical of media effects research on the basis that much of it is "narrowly individualist" and ignores the relationship that society has with the media. He states that by employing individualistic definitions to describe the concept of media violence and the potential effects of exposure to it, media effects research has neglected to acknowledge the wider range of media content that may be used by different individuals for different purposes and with very different outcomes. This view is shared

by other researchers concerned with the validity of the media effects model (e.g., Barker, 1997; Rowland; 1997; Vine; 1997). In turn, Gauntlett notes that stereotyped views of what constitutes anti-social behaviour or anti-social personalities often differ so dramatically from the way in which individuals interpret their own anti-social tendencies as to render any comparison meaningless. Just as research has shown a relationship between individual identification with media events and characters that reflect personally meaningful family or social situations and positive attitudes towards such media, it has also shown that young offenders often do not identify with any media characters and do not relate the media to their own situation in any way (Hagell and Newburn, 1994). Research undertaken by Hagell and Newburn, (1994) showed that young offenders may be relatively uninterested in media violence if it does not conform to their own experiences. The findings of this research suggest that where media content is taken out of context and does not fit the concepts that individuals generate to justify or facilitate their offending behaviour, it will not be considered important to them, and is therefore unlikely to influence their behaviour. In many ways, these findings reflect, as we will see, the results of research undertaken specifically in relation to the use of child pornography by child sex offenders.

Child Pornography and Sexual Offending

According to Healy (1996), law enforcement agencies and monitoring groups in Australia, the US and the UK report that a large proportion of individuals convicted of sexual offences against children are found to possess child pornography. However, these agencies are loathe to imply a causal relationship between the use of child pornography and child abuse. Rather, as stated in a report by the Commonwealth of Australia (1995),

possession of child pornography is taken as an indicator that child abuse is likely to have occurred. In turn, Giannangelo (1996) argues that just as sports fans tend to keep copies of sports magazines, it is not surprising that people who appear obsessed with sex and sexual fantasy would have pornography. Given that not all sports fans actually play sports, this comment may also be taken to suggest that not all individuals who possess child pornography have sex with children.

Law enforcement based generalisations regarding the relationship between child pornography and sex offending are problematic, not least because identification of the presence of pornography in the homes of sex offenders is rarely accompanied by comparison statistics for the possession of such material amongst the non-offending population. Given that this relationship appears to be firmly entrenched in the minds of law enforcement officials, it is possible that the apparent correlation between the possession of child pornography and conviction for child abuse is the result of 'self fulfilling prophecies'. This correlation may reflect investigating officers' use of knowledge regarding suspects' involvement with child pornography to gain convictions in child abuse cases, or as grounds for investigation in relation to child abuse.

In addition to data provided by law enforcement agencies, a significant body of academic research has examined the relationship between sexual offending and media use. This research may be roughly divided into three groups; that which has compared regional and longitudinal differences in sexual crimes and distribution of sexual media (Baron and Strauss, 1989; Court, 1984; Gentry, 1991; Kutchinsky, 1973; Scott and Schwalm, 1988), that which has examined preference for different pornography types by offence status

(Becker and Stein, 1991; Carter, Prentky, Knight, Vanderveer and Boucher, 1987; Cook and Fosen, 1970; Knight and Prentky, 1990; Knight, Rosenberg and Schneider, 1985), and that which has compared use of pornography amongst general and sexual offender populations (Carter and Prentky, 1990; Carter et al, 1987; Cook and Fosen, 1970; Langevin, Lang, Wright, Handy, Frenzel and Black, 1988; Marshall, 1988). Research comparing the use of pornography amongst general and sexual offender populations has also included a substantial body of work examining the age of onset of exposure to pornography of sexual offenders and non-offenders (Condon and Nutter, 1988; Nutter and Kearns, 1993),

Regional and Longitudinal Differences by the Distribution of Sexual Media

Despite a number of studies reporting positive correlations between increases in sexual offence rates and increases in sex magazine circulation, after controlling for changes in other social and cultural factors (such as increased levels of other crimes, increased willingness to report crime, increased political tolerance of 'deviant' behaviours, poverty and urbanisation) these correlations often cease to achieve significance (Bauserman, 1996; Kutchinsky, 1991). Furthermore, in studies that have continued to demonstrate a correlation between sexual offence rates and access to sexual media after controlling for these factors, this correlation has tended to be limited to 'soft core' sexual representations (such as those portrayed in Playboy or Penthouse) while 'hard core' sexual representations (such as those portrayed in 'Hustler' or adult movie theatres) have demonstrated no such effect (Scott and Schwalm, 1988). Nevertheless, given that few of these studies distinguished between sexual offenders who target adult victims and those who target child victims, or indeed between exposure to pornography depicting the

sexualisation of adults versus pornography depicting the sexualisation of children, their applicability to the current investigation is limited.

Use of Pornography amongst General and Sexual Offender Populations

Generally, research comparing the sexual media use of sex offenders and non-offenders has found very little difference between these two populations in terms of the amount of pornography used, type of pornography used, or age of first exposure to pornography. Indeed, although some studies have shown a higher level of current use of pornography amongst offenders than non-offenders (eg. Marshall, 1988), in many instances offender exposure to pornography has been identified as occurring later or less frequently than non-offender exposure. Furthermore, in studies that have shown higher current use of pornography by sex offenders, rarely has the rate of use sufficiently been high as to suggest that involvement with pornography may account for offence propensity. This conclusion is supported by research showing relatively low rates of sex offending by individuals who have been identified as committing offences involving child pornography. For instance, research by Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004) found that only eight percent of individuals identified by US State police as having committed child exploitation pornography offences had also committed a child sexual offence against an identifiable victim. Similarly, Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2005) found that 11 percent of men in their sample of 1,713 cases involving child pornography possession had previously been arrested for a sexual offence. While Seto and Eke (2005) found that 24 percent of a sample of 201 child pornography offenders had a prior history involving a contact sexual offence, only four percent were identified as going on to commit a contact sexual offence within (an average) 2.5 years of release following their child pornography

conviction. Additionally, Seto and Eke noted child pornography offenders who had previously committed a contact sexual offence were most likely to re-offend in this manner.

Preference for Different Pornography Types by Offence Status

Although limited in number and generalisability, studies that have distinguished between individuals who commit sexual offences against adults and those who commit offences against children have demonstrated some differences between the groups. For instance, individuals who have been convicted of offences against children appear to demonstrate later exposure to such material than individuals who offend against adults, or non-offenders (Nutter and Kearns, 1993). At the same time, however, they are more likely to report using pornography at the time of offending (Langevin and Curnoe, 2004) than those who have been convicted of offences against adults. In such cases, child pornography has commonly been used to desensitise and groom children to engage in the types of activities portrayed in the material. Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004) also comment on this propensity, while Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2005) report that in 36 percent of the cases they studied, child pornography possessors had either shown, given or sent child pornography to identified or targeted victims. In other studies, researchers have found that older adolescents and young adults who self reported an interest in sex with children and adolescents were more likely than those who did not report this propensity to frequently use pornography and to state that they used, or have friends who used child pornography and/or violent pornography (Briere and Runtz, 1989; Hegna, Mossige and Wichstrom, 2004).

In light of the relatively high reported association between use of child pornography and sexual attraction to children but relatively low identified association between use of child pornography and offences against children; some researchers suggests that the higher levels of reported pornography use among child sex offenders (than among adult sexual offenders) may result from the significantly greater stigma attached to child sex crimes and consequently greater motivations to avoid or displace blame for their actions, and/or avoid adverse penal consequences (Bauserman, 1996; Howitt, 1995). Certainly, in case studies of other highly stigmatised crimes, such as serial killings and violent sex crimes, law enforcement officials have also identified the significance of the presence of pornography in both the homes of offenders and as part of their legal defence strategy (Mellish, 1989; cited in Giannangelo, 1996). However, this suggestion does not explain the association between use of child pornography and predispositions towards sexual offending among populations who have not yet been identified as engaging in criminal behaviour. In a recent study undertaken by Seto, Cantor and Blanchard (2006) use of child pornography was found to be a more reliable predictor of paedophilia, as measured by sexual arousal to images of naked children, than prior sexual offending against children. Similarly, in a study of 39 men assessed at an outpatient clinic in response to concerns about their use of the Internet for sexual purposes, Galbreath, Berlin and Sawyer (2002) found that 55 percent had accessed child pornography and 34 percent had attempted to solicit a minor for the purposes of sexual gratification.

Child Pornography and Sexual Fantasy

Regardless of whether associations between child sex offending and reported child pornography use are intended to serve the offenders defence of their behaviour, or are

actually related to the offence behaviour itself, none of the evidence for this association suggests that sexual media use necessarily precedes or in any way causes child sexual offending (Bauserman, 1996). Rather, in studies of both convicted child sexual offenders and individuals who demonstrate propensities towards offending but have not been detected by law enforcement agencies, the earliest and most notable predictor of an expressed interest in the sexualisation of children is early sexual experience and/or personal experience of child abuse (Briere and Runtz, 1989; Daleiden, Kaufman, Hilliker and O'Neil, 1998; Hegna, Mossige and Wichstrom, 2004; Howitt, 1995). Furthermore, although no research has been undertaken to compare the nature of personal experiences of child sexual abuse with the specific details of any subsequent fantasies regarding the sexualisation of children, Howitt suggests that decisions regarding use of child pornography by individuals who demonstrate a sexual interest in children may be in part determined by whether they are able to find material that specifically services these fantasies.

In a series of case studies Howitt (1995) found that only one of 11 men who had been convicted for sexual offences against children reported extensive use of commercial child pornography and by the time this person first encountered the material he had already been committing physical offences for several years. He concludes that those who use child pornography represent a minority of individuals who commit criminal sexual offences against children. This conclusion is supported by other research examining the use of child pornography and erotica by child sex offenders (Becker and Stein, 1991; Langevin et al, 1988). In terms of explaining this lack of involvement with media

portraying the sexualisation of children, a number of the offenders interviewed by Howitt stated that they found commercial pornography distasteful and degrading to the individuals portrayed. However, many of these individuals were identified as collecting and/or using non-pornographic images of children to generate sexual fantasies. This material was usually acquired from magazines and the mainstream media and portrayed subjects in naturalist environments, or posed without the explicit display of genitals. As indicated by findings from earlier research concerning the use of pornography (Marshall 1988; Mosher, 1988), Howitt suggested that the general lack of interest that his sample of child sexual offenders demonstrated for commercial child pornography reflected the “very specific erotic fixation that they showed towards a particular age group and physical type” (p 23).

Variations in Patterns and Motives Associated with Use of Child Pornography

The concept of offence fixation on particular victim types and scenarios is supported by a review of research and interview material undertaken by Lanning (1992). Lanning states that sexual offenders who commit crimes against children demonstrate very specific preferences for the age and gender of the children against whom they offend and that when they do collect child pornography this preference is reflected in the images. Similarly, in a more general analysis of mainstream pornography use Mosher (1988) concludes that individuals will only respond positively to pornography when it matches an existing sexual script that is considered to be personally arousing. Indeed, following a review of the effects of both aggressive and non-aggressive pornography, Lyons, Anderson and Larson (1994) concluded that written stories have the most consistent

effects on attitudes and behaviour, followed by audiotapes and finally visual stimuli. They suggest that such effects result from the capacity of written and audio material to “allow for greater latitude in personalising sexual fantasies” (pp. 305).

Interestingly, Howitt’s study of child sexual offenders showed that many of them took photographs of the children that they abused during the abuse experience, or expressed a desire to do so. Similarly, Lanning identified the capture of children at the specific age considered most desirable to the offender as a powerful motivator for the production and collection of child pornography. In the case of the offenders studied by Howitt this motivation appeared to extend to the capture of subjects in the process of enacting the specific fantasy that motivated the offence. This material could then be used to masturbate to at a later date or to provide stimulation for further fantasy development. In addition to this type of use of child pornography (and naturalist images of children) and use during offence commission to normalise the sexual activity to victims, other motivations for the collection and use of child pornography have been identified as:

- Providing arousal and gratification to stimulate the users sexual drive and as an aid during masturbation (Lanning, 1992),
- Reinforcing, validating and justifying sexual attraction to children such that the user is able to convince him/herself that their feelings are not abnormal and are shared by others (Tate, 1990),
- Supporting profit driven activities, either through the sale of child porn or links to other markets involved in the exploitation of children,

- Providing a trophy of memento of actual child abuse (Goldstein, 1999),
- Providing blackmail material that can be used against children who have been sexually exploited during their production in order to ensure their silence regarding the incident.

(Healy, 1996; Lanning, 1992; Quayle and Taylor, 2002b)

In contrast to legal assumptions, all of these motives for consuming objectionable media in the form of child pornography imply a pre-existing sexual interest in children, or the sexual exploitation of children for personal gain. Giannangelo (1996, pp35) suggests that “pornography is to the [offender] as gasoline is to the arsonist...Magazines and movies definitely help ‘fuel the fire’. However, without gasoline, the arsonist still finds a match”. Despite this conclusion, however, it is acknowledged that any ‘fuelling of the desires’ of individuals who demonstrate an interest in the subject matter of objectionable material is of concern to both the public and law enforcement agencies. Such ‘fuelling’ implies the possibility of child abuse occurring either more frequently or, in the case of material of a sadistic nature, in a manner that causes increased harm to the victim.

Uses and Gratifications Model of Media Consumption

The findings of the media effects research reviewed thus far support the contention that identification of media effects may be less important than identification of media uses (Gauntlett, 1998). In terms of ongoing enquiry into the social influence of the media, Gauntlett suggests that academic resources may be best employed to explore of the ways in which individuals use the media to interpret and relate to their social world, and to justify associated beliefs about it. The issue then is not whether objectionable media

content affects individuals negatively, but why some people use it and go on using it and what such use says about them. This view is consistent with the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement. The Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement advocates a socially deterministic view of media consumption. It states that individuals purposefully select and use specific media to gratify social and psychological needs (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974, 20, cited in Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren, 1985). These needs are said to be derived from and/or influenced by the individuals social environment (eg. other opportunities for communication) and psychological disposition (eg. specific personality traits and interests, motives to communicate, and strategies for seeking information and diversion). As such, the Uses and Gratifications model proposes that media consumers are active in defining their own media behaviour and that differences in individual need lead to differences in individual use of media sources (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974, cited in Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren, 1985). Furthermore, media consumers are identified as interpreting media in different ways and selectively attending to messages that specifically cater to the needs that they seek to gratify. Where gratification is forthcoming, research suggests that affected individuals will be more likely to choose to consume the associated media product again at a later date (Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren, 1985).

Early research undertaken within the Uses and Gratifications framework sought to identify motives for media use by developing typologies that link use of a particular medium to specific social and psychological needs. Within this context, motives are defined as “general dispositions that influence peoples actions taken to fulfil a need or

want” (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000, p178). These studies emphasised the significance of television content in gratifying individual needs such as diversion (pass time, escape from routine problems/emotional release), personal relationships (companionship, social relationships, social utility), personal identity (self reference, reality exploration, value reinforcement), and surveillance (information seeking) - (McQuail, Blumler and Brown, 1972).

Identification of various motivational typologies resulted in the recognition that gratification of social and personal needs may occur by way of at least three different modes of media interaction. These include: attention to media content, exposure to the media per se, and through the social context in which the media involvement occurs (Blumler, 1974). In the case of personal relationships, for instance, an individual may ‘tune in’ to a particular soap opera because they feel some form of interpersonal connection to the characters portrayed and involvement in the show provides them with a sense of social continuity. Alternatively, they may simply ‘turn it on’ for the sense of companionship that the presence of voices provides in an otherwise empty house, or they may choose that particular program because other people in the household are interested in it and the person making the selection is taking the opportunity to spend time with them. At the same time, similar media may be used to satisfy different needs (eg. a soap opera may be watched as a means of passing time, sharing time with other family members, or gathering information for future social interaction with others who watch the program).

Given the different ways that individuals seeking to gratify similar needs may use the media and similar ways that individuals seeking to gratify different needs may employ, more recent research has attempted to link motives for media use with individual attitudes towards the media and specific behaviours associated with media interaction (Anderson, Collins, Schmidt and Jacobvitz, 1996; Ferguson and Perse, 2000; Perse, 1990a; Perse, 1990b; Perse, 1986, cited in Rubin, 2002; Perse and Dunn, 1998; Rubin, 1985; Rubin, 1984; Rubin, 1983, cited in Rubin, 2002; Rubin and Bantz, 1989, cited in Rubin, 2002; Rubin, Haridakis and Eyal, 2003; Rubin and Rubin, 1982). These studies have shown that patterns of individual media use are relatively consistent within personal circumstances and that individuals tend to develop enduring associations between media content and the gratification of particular needs and motivations (Rubin, 2002).

Expectancy-Value Theory of Uses and Gratifications

Drawing from the conceptual framework of Expectancy-Value theory (Fishbein, 1963, cited in Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), proponents of the Uses and Gratifications approach argue that: “gratifications sought from the media experience are a function of both beliefs (expectations) that audience members hold about media sources and the affective evaluations (value) that they attach to media attributes” (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985, p. 63). It is suggested that individual media use is dependent on specific judgements about the types of attributes that media sources are likely to possess, and the degree to which these attributes may contribute to meeting personal social and psychological needs. Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985) propose a fourfold typology of media motivations:

1. Positive Approach – Where a media object is believed to possess a positively valued attribute the individual will be motivated to seek the attribute from the media source.
2. Seeking of Alternatives – Where a media object is not believed to possess a positively valued attribute the individual will be motivated to seek that attribute using other sources.
3. True Avoidance – Where a media object is believed to possess a negatively valued attribute the individual will be motivated to avoid the attribute by non-involvement with the media source.
4. Negative Approach – Where a media object is not believed to possess a negatively valued attribute the individual may be motivated to use the object, especially if available alternatives are believed to possess that attribute.

Palmgreen and Rayburn's typology of media motivations infers that individuals will only engage with specific media sources if they believe that the media source (or the process of engaging with it) is likely to possess a specific attribute of positive value to them, or if they believe that the source does not possess negatively valued attributes and no other more positively valued alternatives are available to them. Referring to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985) identify three ways in which an individual may develop beliefs (expectancies) about the attributes offered by a specific object.

1. Descriptive: By directly observing the media object

2. Informational: Through information provided by a third party that the individual accepts as credible
3. Inferential: By logically drawing conclusions based on former experience with similar objects, stereotyping, personal theories of implicit personality, and causal attributions.

It is suggested that in terms of the media, information obtained from external sources forms a large part of “our total belief system, especially concerning [those] objects with which we have little personal experience” (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985, p. 70). Much of this type of information comes from the social environment in which an individual exists. Research suggests that as well as providing information about the nature of the content of specific media; an individual’s social environment also provides information about the quality and acceptability of such content (Blumler, 1985). The degree to which an individual observes such value judgements during the process of selecting media content for consumption appears to be contingent on factors such as interpersonal associations, social identity and the context of the situation in which the media is consumed.

Interpersonal Associations, Social Identity, and Context of Media Consumption

A substantial body of Uses and Gratifications research has demonstrated the importance of an individual’s social environment in reducing or imposing constraints on his or her media activity and the gratifications that he or she receives from it (Blumler, 1985; Canary and Spitzberg, 1993; Perse and Courtright, 1993). Rubin (2002, p. 528) states that

the media compete with other sources of social and psychological gratification for selection, attention and use. He contends that people are typically more influential than the media in defining the gratification seeking process; particularly where the gratification sought involves social interaction. Individuals are said to be more likely to choose media for social purposes when they lack other opportunities for interpersonal interaction (Canary and Spitzberg, 1993, Perse and Rubin, 1990; Rubin and Rubin, 1982).

Conversely, opportunities for social interaction are likely to impose constraints on media use, both in terms of the time available to engage with the media and the social acceptability of the type of media with which an individual engages. In some cases this is situation specific and relates to social context, potential for interaction and attitudes (Rubin, 2002). For instance, within the context of a family, choice of media consumption (such as television viewing) is often left to one person, with other family members choosing to participate for social utility purposes (e.g. as a means of sharing time with that person, as a means of obtaining information for future discussion etc.) (McQuail, 2000). Similarly, individuals who may be interested in a particular type of media content (e.g. pornography, soap operas) may choose not to engage with that media if they are in the presence of others who they know do not approve of the material. In other cases, choice of media content is mediated by social identity and roles such that a devout supporter of one political party will not attend to media information provided by another (Blumler, 1985).

In line with these concepts, Malamuth, Addison and Koss (2000) suggest that differences between the degree to which individuals with similar personality dispositions seek out and respond to media content are influenced by their on-going social relationships and environment. While not specifically focused on violent and pornographic media, research has shown that the presence and reactions of television co-viewers (real or recorded) may significantly influence individual evaluations of specific media content (Leventhal and Cupchik, 1975, cited in Nathanson, 2001; Leventhal and Mace, 1970). For instance, individuals viewing comic material have been found to base their own judgements of how enjoyable the material is on the reactions of those around them (Bryant and Miron, 2002). Similar effects have been observed in response to experimentally manipulated conditions involving the planting of either enthusiastically appreciative or non responsive research confederates in a nightclub during the performance of a music band (Hocking, Margreiter, and Hylyon, 1977; cited in Bryant and Miron, 2002). In a more complicated example of this phenomenon, Zillmann, Weaver, Mundorf and Aust (1986) observed that males who viewed horror film material reported greater enjoyment of the film when accompanied by a female confederate who responded in a distressed manner, whilst females preferred the film when accompanied by a male who did not express distress. They concluded that the social circumstances of each of these scenarios and the socially conditioned expectations of the opposite gendered companions behaviour within these circumstances, significantly determined the individuals perception of the media content.

This last piece of research illustrates the importance of distinguishing the exact nature of any relationships identified as mediating media consumption and influence. In the case of

objectionable media content, it highlights the potential for consumption patterns and associated gratifications to be differentially influenced by consumer's experiences with individuals who condone such content and their experiences with individuals who do not. Most research considering the effects of social influences on media consumption that have been undertaken using the Uses and Gratifications framework have considered mediums other than the Internet. In contrast to these other mediums, the Internet provides the potential for media based social interaction and the gratification of social needs (Song, Larose, Eastin and Lin, 2004). Therefore, while off-line relationships may mediate media consumption and influence so too may online relationships developed during the media consumption process. Of specific interest then is whether, and how, these relationships compete in relation to media selection, attention and use.

The Effects of Different Types of Relationships on Media Interpretation

Generally, the way in which different types of relationships exert differential influence on media consumption is not well explored. Furthermore, little, if any, related research appears to have been undertaken in relation to the consumption of objectionable material. However, some insight may be gained into the nature of this phenomenon from research focused on the relationship between the social environment of children and young people and their experience of specific types of media.

In comparison to research showing that parent involvement in discussing media content with their children most frequently results in the reduction of positive attitudes towards such content (Nathanson, 1999), research into the effects of adolescent peer discussion of media content suggests that such engagement may increase positive orientation towards

the material involved (Nathanson, 2001). Similarly, research considering the interpersonal communication of sexual information has shown that when parents talk to their children about sex their children tend to be more cautious in their subsequent sexual attitudes and behaviour (Holtzman and Robinson, 1995). However, when peers convey this information the recipients become less cautious.

Nathanson (2001) suggests that differences in the outcomes of peer and parent based discussion regarding antisocial media content are likely to result from differences in the motivations of the communicators. She states that parents are likely to be much more focused on preventing any potential negative effects of media content than peers. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that while parents may review antisocial media content in more critical or condemning way, research has shown that within the context of their discussions peers do not always advocate the content of violent or antisocial media (Suess, Suoninen, Garitaonandia, Juaristi, Koikkalainen and Oleaga, 1998). Rather, much peer based interaction regarding anti-social media content is neutral in tone (ie. describing plot events). Nathanson's (2001) research suggests that during adolescence, peer discussion of antisocial content occurs much more frequently than parental discussion of the same content. Furthermore, regardless of the way in which antisocial media content is discussed, Nathanson (2001) found that adolescents perceive their peers to be positively oriented towards it. As with parent co-viewing effects on younger children, this perception was related to the simple fact that peers chose to view the content and to talk to them about it.

Nathanson (2001) also found that perceived peer approval of antisocial media content was strongly associated with personal approval of antisocial media content. Together, these variables were found to be strongly related to attitudes supporting aggressive behaviour and to peer discussion of anti-social media content. Nathanson (2001, p. 265) proposes that positive orientations towards antisocial media content are the “mechanisms through which peer discussion influences aggression”. However, she admits that it is just as possible that adolescents may orient towards antisocial content because they hold attitudes that support antisocial behaviour and that association and discussion of antisocial media material is simply the expression of this shared interest.

Group Identity and Media Consumption

As indicated by Suess et al (1998) young people may use television and other media to define or reinforce their relationships with peers, or to distinguish their peer group from others. Casas (1998) states that media use and media contents can be used to strengthen peer relationships and create a sense of peer group identity. Different subcultural groups express their group identity by similarities in media use. When children grow older (in general, from puberty onward), media-related play with peers is substituted by discussions with peers about media contents. Furthermore, interest in a specific type of media has been identified as a valid means for young people to connect with others and this process appears to be particularly appealing to adolescents who share common social and/or academic problems (Suess et al, 1998). Of concern is that Suess et al (1998) suggest that interest in specific types of media may be used to validate the identities of these young people and the reinforcing effects of this process contribute to maintaining the use of the media itself and more positive orientations towards it (Nathanson, 2001).

As such, the mere presence of others serves to endorse the media interest. Nathanson argues that the nature of adolescent peer relationships may actually encourage such discussion.

In contrast, and perhaps in response to the authority associated with parent-child relationships, Nathanson (2001) emphasises that peer relationships are based on a sense of equality tied to the possibility of reciprocating rather than responding to behaviours. Because this sense of reciprocity appears to be one of the main distinguishing factors between children's relationships with their peers and their relationships with their parents and other adults, it is said to attain significant importance with the concept of the reciprocal exchange coming to define the peer group norms. Where this concept is identified with a particular type of media, positive orientations towards it are enhanced. As stated by Expectancy-Value theory, positively valued gratifications obtained during a media experience (including social reinforcement) have the power to increase the likelihood of media reuse.

Of note is that the use of media in strengthening adolescent peer group relationships may also occur through analysis of the messages that the media provides young people about their place in society (Casas, 1998). Very little research has been undertaken about the specific social roles that the mainstream media ascribes to children and young people. However, it is clear that these individuals are often described as 'minors' or 'victims' with little power to influence or change their environment or the events that occur within it. In other words, they are treated as an 'out-group'. Therefore it is hardly surprising that

children and young people would use the media that their parents view as undesirable to reinforce any self-identification of themselves as being different from adults. If the media does directly influence the behaviour of those who consume it, one must wonder why media effects research has focused on the aggressive element of media content and not on the potentiality for young people to conform to this relatively disempowered description. As stated by Barker (1997, p. 29):

*We need to research the way the lives of actual children have been affected
by the predominant [media] image of themselves as incompetent.*

While most research concerning the effects of media violence has focused on the way in which children and adolescents may be influenced by exposure to such material, Gauntlett (1998) suggests that this orientation arises from an assumption that media is most likely to effect individuals who are unable to interpret the material in a critical manner. In contrast to this view, Gauntlett (1997) provides evidence that children as young as seven are able to analyse and reproduce media in ways that clearly demonstrate that they are not only critical in their interpretation of media content, but also thoughtful and media literate (see also Buckingham, 1993, 1996, 1997). This finding suggests that the results of research undertaken with children should be generalisable to the adult population. Furthermore, although many of those who are interested in objectionable material may not be children or adolescents they may still be subject to experiencing 'social problems' typically associated with the adolescent period. In the case of individuals who demonstrate an interest in media portraying the sexualization of children,

or any other behaviour that directly challenges commonly accepted social norms, concerns about not fitting in and being socially isolated are likely to be antagonised by the nature of the material to which they are attracted. At the same time, these individuals may perceive an unequal relationship between those who share their interest and those in positions of social authority. This sense of inequality may motivate rebellion against authority structures in the same way that it does for adolescents and continued use of the media to reinforce this distinction.

Summary

Most nations who are signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 agree that child pornography is a violation against children and have taken legislative measures to prevent its production and distribution. In addition, many of these nations also legislate against the possession, production and/or distribution of other media content portraying specific activities that, if enacted, would be considered illegal, criminal, or contrary to the human rights legislation of the country involved. Much of this type of legislation is justified on the grounds that exposure to the offending media content would lead individuals to commit the acts portrayed in that material, and/or make the public more accepting of these acts. However, there is little evidence to support the existence of direct effects between exposure to illegal media content and behaviour.

There is, however, evidence that the exposure to specific types of ‘violent’ and ‘pornographic’ media can prime and reinforce existing attitudes and previously learned behavioural sequences. Furthermore, research has shown that individuals who demonstrate predispositions towards ‘anti-social’ or ‘sexually deviant’ behaviour are

more likely consume and be affected by associated media than those who do not. This evidence provides support for the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement. This model states that individuals will purposefully select and use specific media content to gratify social and psychological needs derived from and/or influenced by their social environment and psychological disposition. Within this context, media consumers are assumed to be active recipients of the media content, interpreting and selectively attending to it in ways that specifically meet their needs and conform to their expectations of human behaviour. Gratifications sought by individual media consumers are said to reflect the beliefs that they hold about media sources and the value that they place on the quality of media attributes. These evaluations are based largely on information gained from the consumer's social environment.

Research has also shown that an individual's social environment may be influential in reducing or imposing constraints on their media activity and the gratifications that they receive from it. It may also increase the likelihood that they will consume specific types of media and that those with associated personality factors will be influenced by the content of that media. Furthermore, different types of relationships within an individual's social environment appear to influence media consumption and interpretation in different ways.

The literature reviewed in this chapter demonstrates that individuals may actually use media to strengthen specific types of relationships and to assist with the development of group social identities. In turn, these identities increase the likelihood of media use and

reinforcement of associated beliefs. As will be discussed in the following chapter, within the context of objectionable media content the degree to which individuals interested in such material may use it to develop social identity and group affiliation may also be influenced by certain attributes of the Internet medium itself.

Chapter 2: Objectionable Material and the Internet

The results of the research reviewed in the preceding chapter suggest that, in interaction with the social environment in which it is consumed, the specific media content selected by an individual may serve to reinforce interest in the subject of the media portrayal and facilitate the development of associated social identities and group norms. The current chapter will explore the relevance of these conclusions to objectionable media content selected and/or consumed within the Internet environment and discuss ways that specific attributes of the Internet environment may influence future media selection and associated behaviours. In order to facilitate this discussion, the following section will review changes to relevant legislation that have occurred in response to the introduction of the Internet.

Objectionable Material, ‘Objectionable Acts’ and Associated Legislation

Within the context of objectionable material, the interest motivating consumption is specifically related to the depiction of acts that are often illegal and associated social identities and group norms are likely to be questionable. Furthermore, although research into media effects has failed to provide compelling evidence for a direct relationship between the consumption of such material and the subsequent commission of the acts portrayed in that material, in many cases the production of the material itself necessitates

that such acts take place. Indeed, in the United States of America¹¹ the production, receipt, distribution, possession, transportation, mailing and advertising of any “visual depiction” portraying a child¹² as being involved in sexually explicit conduct is criminalized on the grounds that it represents “the permanent record of the sexual abuse or exploitation of an actual child” (Lanning, 1992). Similarly, the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 identifies child pornography as a “permanent recording of the exploitation of child or young persons (aged under 16 years) for sexual purposes” and prohibits the possession, supply, distribution, display or exhibition of such material. In turn, although not explicitly identified as justification for anti child pornography legislation, the concept of child pornography being the product of the sexual abuse of children has been identified by the Australian Commonwealth Joint Committee on National Crime Authority (1995, 3.50) as justification for focusing law enforcement efforts on visual, as opposed to written material.

In practical terms, however, the concern with child pornography is primarily on visual, not written, material both in Australia and overseas. It seems that the especially powerful character of visual depictions has partly resulted in this focus. In addition, of course, the production of a photograph or video of actual child sexual abuse necessarily involves the participation of a child, whereas production of written child pornography does not.

¹¹ cited as the worlds most lucrative market for child pornography (Healy, 1996)

¹² under 18 years of age

Given this orientation, it is not unreasonable to contend that media representations showing the rape or physical abuse of adults could also be judged to portray evidence of a crime, or at least as evidence of a transgression against Article 5 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Interestingly, within the international legal context, the suggestion that material portraying the abuse of adults may actually document criminal offences or human rights transgressions does not appear to be taken into consideration when assessing the legality of such material. This omission may be at least partly due to the fact that, unlike the references to child pornography in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, there is no internationally accepted criteria regarding the criminalization of such material. On the contrary, international legislation has frequently been employed to over-rule local decisions regarding the definition of objectionable material other than child pornography. For instance, while several European Union States (including the UK) legislate against specific examples of objectionable material such as child pornography and racism, they are bound by the European Convention on Human rights. This convention is implicitly tied to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, Article 19 of which specifies that:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this includes individual freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers

In turn, Article 10 (2) of the European Convention on Human Rights 1950 states:

the exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of ...public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, protection of the reputation or rights of others

In other words, these documents infer that any State that imposes restrictions on individual rights to freedom of expression must be able to objectively justify such an Act. It is for this reason that in recent years the United Kingdom has received significant pressure to review its Obscene Publications Act 1959, 1964. Scotland and Northern Ireland no longer prescribe to this Act and responsibility for enforcement is being increasingly delegated to non-government agencies (such as the British Board of Film Classification).

The desire to preserve freedom of expression is perhaps most evident in US legislation regarding objectionable material. The 1st Amendment (Bill of Rights 1789) of the Constitution of the United States of America¹³ explicitly guarantees this freedom and as a result few federal restrictions are placed on media material other than child pornography. In the absence of statutory definition, Cohen (2003) identifies the ‘Miller Test of Obscenity’ as the benchmark for legal decisions regarding the legality of publications distributed in the United States of America. This test, arising from the Supreme Courts decision in *Miller v. California* 1973¹⁴, is based on ‘community’ rather than ‘national’ standards such that: “an average person applying contemporary community standards, must find that the material as a whole appeals to the prurient interest; the material must depict, describe, in a patently offensive way sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable law and; the material, taken as a whole, must lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific merit”. The subjective nature of the Miller Test means that associated decisions are easily challenged. Indeed, on the 20th of January 2005, a US district court judge ruled against statutes limiting the distribution of material (such that it is available to community scrutiny) that is legal to privately possess (because it is not open to community scrutiny) on the basis that they are unconstitutional¹⁵. Therefore, it appears that generally, involvement of adults (and animals) in the production of objectionable material is considered as voluntary expression of civil liberties and, given the difficulties inherent in trying to prove otherwise, it is legalised.

¹³ 1787

¹⁴ *Miller v. California*, 413 U.S. 15, 24 (1973)

¹⁵ *U.S. v. Extreme Associates* 352 F Supp 2d 578 (WD Penn 2005)

Changes in Legislation since the Advent of the Internet

Legislation regulating, limiting and defining objectionable material preceded use of the Internet for accessing or distributing such material. However, in many cases this legislation has had to be amended as a result of issues associated with Internet involvement. Commonly, this has resulted in redefinition of the words ‘possession’, ‘publication’ and ‘distribution’ to include electronic means and methods and ascription of responsibilities for monitoring and addressing on-line transgressions to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Internet Content Hosts (ICHs). In addition, recognition that the technology associated with the Internet allows for the production of child pornography, in the absence of any sexual contact with children, has called into question the grounds upon which some legislation is based.

Images of child pornography may be created in their entirety using computer based graphics software, or they may be ‘morphed’ from existing images of children or adults engaged in activities that are not abusive by nature. For instance, an image of an adult engaged in sexual activity may be altered so that the subject appears to look like a child or an image of a child may be artificially inserted into an image showing sexual interaction involving an adult. Given that US legislation regarding child pornography challenges the first amendment on the grounds that they depict the sexual exploitation of children, developments such as these have undermined support for this legislation.

Since 1996, US legislation regarding accessing and/or distributing child pornography on the Internet has undergone significant change. Various Bills legislating against all forms

of child pornography (including morphed and created images portraying imagined abuse) have been put forward, enacted and overturned, only to be replaced by similar Bills and further legal discussion (for a full discussion of this chronology see Appendix A). This discussion has included arguments that such legislation is unconstitutional and the legal equivalent to “prohibiting dirty thoughts”¹⁶. Indeed, during one such debate regarding global child pornography legislation, a US judge suggested that if virtual child pornography could be produced to mimic non-virtual child pornography it might actually contribute to reducing the level of actual abuse against children (Smith, Verrilli, Kelley and Carpenter, 2002). This argument has a long history, with proponents advocating child pornography as a means of expressing sexual feelings in a manner that does not require them to be lived out through interpersonal contact (Bauserman, 1996; Langevin et al, 1988; O’Toole, 1998). Nevertheless, it has also received significant criticism. For instance, Taylor and Quayle (2003) contend that regardless of whether the children portrayed in objectionable images are physically abused during the creation of the visual stimuli, victimisation occurs each time an image of a child is used for a sexual purpose (including sexual fantasy generation, arousal and masturbation). In effect, this activity encourages use of individuals as sexual objects. Furthermore, US proponents of legislation against all forms of child pornography argue that because virtual or morphed child pornography is often indistinguishable from material depicting the sexual abuse of an actual child, allowing the possession and distribution of virtual child pornography would allow defendants who produce or possess material depicting real sexual abuse of children to escape prosecution on the grounds of reasonable doubt regarding the origin of

¹⁶ Ashcroft v. Free Speech Coalition

said material¹⁷. In turn, given that examples of child pornography that are seized are rarely ‘first generation products’ the US Senate has argued that alterations made during scanning and retransmission alone can make it very difficult for image analysts to determine whether or not the images brought to their attention are ‘the genuine article’.

At the time of writing, the debate regarding the viability of legislation against child pornography continues. The most recent addition to this debate is the enactment, in December 2000 of the Children’s Internet Protection Act 2000 (CIPA). CIPA states that schools and libraries have a responsibility to limit access by minors to material featuring child pornography, obscenity or any other material that is judged harmful to minors. In 2002 this Act was also challenged as unconstitutional, only to be re-enacted in June 2003. Although, the current child protection orientation of US legislation differs dramatically from other legislation regarding objectionable material other than child pornography, its presence suggests that the way in which American society views the influence of the media has changed as a result of the introduction of the Internet. The introduction of Internet based amendments to the media legislation of other nations and states such as Australia¹⁸, New Zealand¹⁹, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France, China and Saudi Arabia (to name a few) suggests that they are not alone in this perception. The remainder of this chapter will discuss the way in which the introduction of the Internet has changed perceptions of the relationship between the media used to obtain objectionable material and the material itself.

¹⁷ For a full transcript of the Findings of the report to congress see <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/F?c107sMi3b5:e2919:>

¹⁸ See Broadcasting Services Amendment (on-line Services) Act 1999 and Crime Legislation Amendment (Telecommunications Offences and Other Measures) Act 2004

¹⁹ See, for example, the New Zealand Films, Videos and Publications Classification Amendment Act 2005

The Internet and Objectionable Material

Many of the changes that have been made to legislation since the introduction of the Internet relate to the changing nature of the medium and the need to redefine concepts to align with the electronic environment and the difficulty in regulating access to it (eg. via sales). The speed with which these changes have been put into effect suggests significant concern about differences between this and other media. This concern reflects increasing evidence that for individuals with an interest in subversive activities, the specific mechanisms inherent in the design and utility of the Internet may support involvement in such activities. In contrast to media theories that support the concept of technological determinism however, this evidence does not support the idea that the Internet itself encourages this behaviour. Most Internet users do not engage in subversive communication or activities and in order for them to do so they must choose to access parts of the Internet conducive to such involvement. Just as the size of the Internet makes it difficult for subversive activity to be monitored or controlled, it also makes it difficult for an individual to become involved in subversive activity unless they purposively select relevant sites, bulletin boards, newsgroups or chat rooms. More importantly, once selected, maintenance of ongoing involvement requires purposeful effort on the part of the individual concerned. The Internet, perhaps more so than any other medium, can only serve in a way that it is told to. While it is clear that since its inception the Internet has been extended and modified to perform functions not at all related to its original purpose, McQuail (2000) contends that such developments must also be viewed within the social and cultural contexts that shaped them.

As suggested by McGrath and Casey (2002), the motives that drive subversive behaviour remain consistent regardless of whether they are expressed on the Internet or in more traditional ways. However, the Internet appears to facilitate such expression by providing opportunities for it to occur. Cooper, Boies, Maheu and Greenfield (1999) suggest that this process results from what they refer to as the 'Triple A Engine' of Internet accessibility, affordability and anonymity. The ease, speed and comfort associated with accessing the Internet, together with the relatively low cost of such access and the perception that on-line activities are relatively anonymous is said to 'drive' individual involvement in on-line activities, especially activities that they may be reluctant to enter into off-line. Indeed, the sense of anonymity associated with the Internet medium is said to play an important role in reducing disincentives to such involvement, such as embarrassment or fear of identification. Therefore, individuals become more willing to sample content and engage in activities and behaviours that they may otherwise have considered to pose too great a risk to their social well-being. In addition to these attributes, the fact that the Internet allows users to find and interact with likeminded others, and develop media specific to their needs, dramatically increases the possibilities available to them.

In the case of objectionable material, evidence suggests that the increased opportunities provided in the Internet environment have also contributed to increasing the range of material available. Research comparing the content of pornographic²⁰ magazines and videos with that of stories submitted to a Usenet newsgroup dedicated to the distribution

²⁰ Operationalised as "any sexually explicit material to which access was limited, either by signs or by physical structure, to adults" (Barron and Kimmel, 2000; pp. 165)

of sexual material²¹ has shown that Usenet contributions contain significantly more violent, coercive and non-consensual content and more violence outside of a consensual relationship than magazines or videos (Barron and Kimmel, 2000). Barron and Kimmel (2000) also report that Usenet stories are much more likely than video or magazine stories to depict unequal power relationships in the form of at least one participant (most commonly male) being portrayed as dominant and at least one other (most commonly female) being portrayed as submissive. Notably, they state that where unequal power relationships are shown, magazines are more likely to portray women in dominant or aggressive roles than men, and are more likely to do so than either of the other media types, while Usenet stories are more likely to portray men as the aggressors than magazine or video stories. These results may simply reflect the emergence of objectionable material into the mainstream. Material that was not previously available 'over the counter' is now being compared with that which was. However, within the context of child pornography, Taylor and Quayle (2003), Taylor, Holland and Quayle (2001) and Taylor (1999) have identified similarly disturbing developments.

Child Pornography Pre and Post the Introduction of the Internet

Prior to the 1970's most Western nations had not yet enacted legislation prohibiting child pornography. Indeed, in European countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands, the commercial production and distribution of child pornography magazines and films was reportedly relatively widespread and legally tolerated. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, however, US media exposes focusing on this trade, together with increasing social concern regarding the effects of child sexual victimisation, brought the commercial trade

²¹ alt.sex.stories

in child pornography to a sudden and abrupt halt (Schuijjer and Rossen, 1992). During the following decade (prior to the widespread use of the Internet), police intelligence reports suggest that most child pornography was produced either as hard copy photographs or on video, and distributed via 'underground' networks of interested consumers (Lanning, 1992; Quayle and Taylor, 2003). Given the social stigma and legal ramifications associated with individuals demonstrating an interest in the sexual exploitation of children, such networks rarely advertised their presence. Furthermore, the distribution of most such material equated to an interpersonal exchange of tangible evidence of crimes against children between producers and consumers (eg. physically handing images personally to consumers). In turn, the risk of police detection necessitated the development of trust between those involved in this process.

Although Lanning (1992) argues that the risks involved in distributing child pornography were usually too high for the strictly commercial dealer, the production of such material was illegal and therefore required access to private printing and production capabilities. This, together with the significant time and energy required to develop secure distribution networks, meant that the process tended to incur significant financial costs, many of which were passed on to the consumer. In turn, involvement in child pornography demanded much more than simple motivation. The fact that the child pornography 'business' remained in existence despite law enforcement efforts to the contrary is testimony to the difficulty that one would have encountered in trying to become part of it. Indeed, the difficulties inherent in accessing such groups may explain the dearth of academic literature regarding this phenomenon.

The advent of the Internet and associated scanning equipment significantly reduced the effort needed to distribute or acquire child pornography (and other objectionable material). Individuals in possession of child pornography were suddenly able to advertise their ‘wares’ in a medium that they perceived to be anonymous, and those interested in accessing such material could do so at their leisure from the privacy of their own homes. Anecdotal evidence provided through the media suggests that, initially, the increased opportunities for distributing such material may have led to an increase in associated commercial activity. However, even via the Internet, offering goods for sale leaves a financial ‘paper trail’ and an emerging law enforcement presence in the Internet environment, combined with the fact that much existing material was being uploaded free of charge by consumers, subsequently lead to a marked decline in the market for commercial product (Taylor, 1999; Taylor and Quayle, 2003)²². The process of an individual uploading objectionable material in his or her possession for others to access may appear altruistic; however, it is also mutually beneficial and mutually reinforcing. The more people who engage in this practice, the greater the range of material available to each other them.

Barron and Kimmel (2000) comment that the reduced cost of producing and acquiring ‘pornographic’ material has lead to a “democratization” of the ‘pornography’ market place. The arrival of relatively inexpensive video, digital photo and computer scanning

²² Taylor and Quayle (2003) argue that recent evidence may suggest resurgence in commercial markets specialising in highly specific and graphic examples of child pornography. Nevertheless, the relatively easy availability of cost free material accessible via the Internet undoubtedly remains higher than prior to the introduction of the medium.

technology equipment on mainstream markets means that child pornography and other objectionable material can now be easily produced in the comfort of an individual's home and moved instantaneously across vast networks in electronic format. Indeed, Taylor (1999) states that one of the most disturbing aspects of child pornography since the introduction of the Internet as a means of distribution is its "domestic quality". As stated in Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001), this frequently involves images portraying children involved in sexual activities that are 'set' in family rooms. Similarly, after examination of US law enforcement records documenting cases in which individuals were charged with pornography related offences (both Internet and non-Internet related), Finkelhor and Ormrod (2005) noted that a sizable number of these cases involved the production of child pornography depicting a child member of the offender's family²³.

Taylor (1999) and Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) also identify an increase in images portraying children aged less than 5 or 6 years old and a similar increase in the number of such images that demonstrate sadistic qualities. In line with this finding, Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2005) report that 21 percent of offenders in a US study of child pornography possessors arrested for Internet related crimes possessed images that depicted violent activities such as rape, bondage and torture. Notably, the research undertaken by Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2005, p. 16) also revealed that 40 percent of sampled cases involved "dual offences of child pornography possession and child sexual victimisation", and 15 percent "both possessed child pornography and attempted

²³ 25 percent of juveniles who were either involved in the production of child pornography or who were shown child pornography as part of a "seduction" process were members of the offenders family.

to sexually victimise children by soliciting an undercover investigators posing on-line as minors”.

Prior to the introduction of the Internet as a means of distributing objectionable material, the viability of producing material portraying highly specific content (such as children of specific ages or children being subjected to sadistic acts) was limited by the risks inherent in marketing it to the relatively small number of individuals who appeared to show an interest in consuming it. However, the development of new digital photographic technology has allowed individuals with specific ‘niche’ interests to produce their own material without having to worry about recouping the costs of the production process. In contrast to the generalised nature of child pornography that Howitt (1995) and Marshall (1988) claimed as a disincentive to the use of such material by individuals with specific sexual fantasies regarding children, the increasing amount of specialised content available on-line means that almost everyone should be able to find something to match their fantasies. Furthermore, where no such material is identified as available, computer programs may be used to digitally enhance or ‘morph’²⁴ content to meet consumer demands. Similarly, given that fantasies often reflect the development of events over time, the fact that digital video may be used to capture stories that can later be transferred as still images or short moving sequences may serve to enhance the experience of many Internet users (Taylor, Holland and Quayle, 2001; Taylor, 1999).

²⁴ Combining two or more images to create a new image.

Internet Applications

Individuals interested in accessing child pornography via the Internet may employ any number of methods to do so. At the most basic level, this may involve searching through websites. As stated by Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) the proliferation of free web servers has meant that uploading child pornography to a website is a relatively simple process and one that 'uploaders' perceive to be anonymous. However, apart from advertising ones presence and interests, such activity does not provide the owner of the website with much opportunity to access new images. Furthermore, for those searching for a specific type of image, sifting through endless websites and the images placed on them can be a particularly laborious process. In order to facilitate a more efficient method of acquisition and distribution, the owners of some child pornography websites include links to newsgroups.

Newsgroups offer an effective alternative to websites in that they provide a medium for individuals who share similar interests to interact with each other directly. Those with an interest in child pornography may use them to communicate with other likeminded individuals and share information and advice. Newsgroups also provide an opportunity for such individuals to post and request specific types of material (Taylor, Quayle and Holland, 2001). However, while Newsgroups obviously provide more opportunity for interaction than websites, they do not provide the opportunity for real-time involvement.

Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) and Email allow users to send and receive messages and objectionable material to and from each other, however, whereas Email provides a

medium for direct, personal interaction with known individuals, BBS provide greater opportunity for individuals to 'meet' with each other on-line. Internet Relay Chat (IRC) applications extend this function by providing a "vast multi-user discussion forum" that allows "users to communicate through text ... in real-time" (Taylor, Quayle and Holland, 2001, p. 101). Individuals may enter public 'chat-rooms' and become involved in any conversation that is currently underway, including conversations regarding the possibility of obtaining or exchanging objectionable material. Once relationships are formed users may choose to engage in one on one interaction through Email or a Direct Client-to-Client (DCC) feature. Alternatively, they may be invited to 'private' chat-rooms with specific entry requirements (eg. the provision of a specific type of objectionable material) or they may choose to continue their association using Email or instant messaging applications such as ICQ and Peer-to-Peer (P2P) applications. Instant messaging applications allow individuals to identify when others with whom they are acquainted are on-line, send them a message and, if the message is accepted, begin immediate, real time, uninterrupted one on one interaction. These interactive features also allow the exchange of multiple different types of media. Through the use of file servers (F-Serves²⁵) and File Transfer Protocols (FTP) individuals using IRC or ICQ are also able to open up their digital storage facilities to others and swap child pornography (and other material) from one computer to another. Recent developments in Peer-to-peer (P2P) applications mean that even without the prior establishment of relationships between Internet users, those interested in objectionable material may go on-line, quickly identify others who share their interest, and download images and associated material directly from these

²⁵ An application that allows individuals to share files in a specified folder with other IRC users without the need for direct interaction between them.

individuals computers. This process may then lead to the development of a peer network grouping and on-going real time interaction over the longer term.

Choice of Applications to Access Objectionable Material

Quayle and Taylor (2003) suggest that individuals interested in obtaining objectionable material often start by using less interactive Internet applications (eg. Websites and Newsgroups). Depending of their experiences with these applications, Quayle and Taylor state that movement through the different mechanisms of accessing child pornography from the Internet is influenced by a combination of personal preferences and associated utility. In line with the uses and gratifications model of media involvement, choices regarding the applications used to access such material may be seen as indicative of the social and psychological needs being served by the media itself (Taylor and Quayle, 2003). For example, Quayle and Taylor (2001) describe the case of an individual who stated that he decided to move from use of Newsgroups to access objectionable material to increasingly more interactive applications because he had become bored with static images. Through use of IRC, this individual was able to link up with others who provided him with movie clips. As such, it appears that the concept of habituation may play a role in motivating individuals to progress from websites to more interactive forms of accessing child pornography. As stated by Taylor (1999):

The reason why adults with a sexual interest in children collect child pornography is to facilitate fantasy generation and sexual arousal. However, the capacity of a picture or series of pictures to induce sexual arousal diminishes with continued exposure (p. 4)

Sexual Reinforcement, Habituation and Compulsion

The act of sexual release (whether through masturbation or other means) is readily acknowledged as a very powerful form of reinforcement and the desire to achieve sexual release a powerful motivator. Indeed, in the absence of social constraints the pursuit of sexual gratification may over-ride an individual's pursuit of more social or academic interests (eg. Pfaff, 1999). That the Internet provides such conditions appears to be supported by statements made by individuals who had been convicted of child pornography related offences (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a). For instance, one offender described how immediately after using the material for masturbation and achieving sexual release he became appalled at their own behaviour and found the imagery "distasteful" (p. 339). Despite these feelings, however, this individual continued to seek out the material on a number of subsequent occasions.

Research concerning the effects of masturbating to any kind of sexually explicit material, let alone child pornography, is very difficult to find. Indeed, a review of the literature concerning the effects of pornography yielded only one such investigation (Lyons, Anderson and Larson, 1994). Furthermore, the study (undertaken by Schaefer and Coglán in 1977, cited in Lyons, Anderson and Larson, 1994) only sampled eight men. Nevertheless, its findings are worth noting as it demonstrated that individuals who ejaculated immediately following exposure to a sexually explicit written passage describing heterosexual activity showed greater penile arousal to pornographic material over time as compared to those who were provided with non pornographic material after reading the passage. On the basis of their review, Lyons, Anderson and Larson (1994)

contend that “there is substantial reason to suspect that sexual gratification is a potentially powerful reinforcer of the consumption of pornography and thus may also have a significant impact on the effects of this exposure” (p. 302). Notably, Lyons, Anderson and Larson (1994) also contend that sexual content presented as text may offer even more powerful reinforcement than text because it allows the user to develop imagery that precisely fit a personal fantasy scenario.

Despite acting as a powerful motivator, however, sexual desire is also very prone to the processes of habituation. After repeated exposure to a chosen sexualised image, an individual will fail to become sexually aroused in response to it (Taylor, 1999). Research has shown that these effects may lead individuals to seek out new examples of the material that they find stimulating (Quayle and Taylor, 2003; Quayle and Taylor, 2002a). As illustrated by a quotation from a bulletin board dedicated to the exchange of child pornography:

...With this hobby we get bored after a while with the usual and we risk a bit to get new stuff or actual experience. Its a natural progression. Like stealing. You start small. Get bored. Go for bigger stuff...(Taylor, 1999; p 5),

Taylor (1999) goes on to suggest that rather than reduce the effects of habituation, the access that the Internet provides to large numbers of images of child pornography actually increases these effects. He states that upon habituation to an image, a consumer

of child pornography will seek out new sources of stimulation. Prior to the Internet, the acquisition of new images of child pornography took time. Since the Internet, however, access to new images may occur almost immediately. Therefore, the consumer is able to sample and habituate to a much greater number of images over a much shorter timeframe than was previously possible. However, given the volume involved, and the ease of electronic image duplication, within the context of websites in particular many of the same images will undoubtedly be repeatedly encountered during the search for new material. For this reason consumers may become motivated to seek new sources and means of accessing images from avenues previously unknown to them.

Trading Objectionable Material

According to Taylor (1999), as financial motives for distributing child pornography and other objectionable material have declined, a new form of trading activity has developed. This activity involves individuals actively offering to exchange examples of such material that they have in their possession for new examples provided by others who share their interest (Taylor, 1999; Taylor, Holland and Quayle, 2001). In contrast to financial processes or exchange processes occurring outside of the Internet environment, however, the exchange of electronic media content does not require either party to actually give up the material in their possession. Rather, it is simply replicated and downloaded to another computer. In turn, individuals who become involved in this process may come to possess sizable collections of objectionable images and related material, all of which may be employed in future trading activity.

Research into the trade of child pornography suggests that this process is subject to similar rules of negotiation as are applied to other property transactions (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a; Taylor and Quayle, 2003). Images that are less valued include older images, those that have been in circulation for a while and those that show common scenes. Rare images such as those that have only recently entered circulation, those that are highly specific in content, and those that may be used to complete a series are of greater value during negotiations and individuals wishing to acquire them must trade an image of equal scarcity or value. Alternatively, a number of less valuable images may be accepted as “payment” for a single image of greater value.

As with financial trading activities, the process of trading child pornography creates a supply and demand scenario. Furthermore, just as some people only accumulate enough money to meet their personal needs while others seek to acquire additional assets for the purpose of saving, investment or social spending, research undertaken Quayle and Taylor (2002a) shows that individuals who use the Internet to acquire objectionable material also demonstrate different patterns in terms of the type and amount of material that they choose to acquire and the purposes that they put this material to. Specifically, they identify differences between individuals who consume objectionable material on-line, individuals who collect objectionable material and save it off-line, and individuals who share their interest in objectionable material with others during on-line interaction. Quayle and Taylor (2002a) and Taylor and Quayle (2003) also highlight associations between involvement in collecting behaviours and motives for on-line social interaction. Together, these behaviours and motives are perceived to be influential in determining the

likelihood that individuals will engage in increasing levels of on-line activity and that this activity may manifest in physical offences continuous with their interest in objectionable material. The following sections will discuss these behaviours and motivations with the view to developing an understanding of the likelihood and mechanisms of such a 'progression'.

Collecting Objectionable Material

As a result of examining the nature of collections of child pornography found in the possession of child sex offenders, Lanning (1992) concludes that it is important to distinguish between simply viewing child pornography, and the collection of such material. He states that the process of saving child pornography is a significant indicator of the relationship that an offender has to the material itself. Indeed, in addition to acquiring objectionable material for its use in stimulating fantasy, arousal and associated activities, Taylor and Quayle (2003) suggests that some offenders collect such material specifically for its value as part of a collection. As stated by one of the individuals interviewed in Quayle and Taylor's (2002a) study of individuals who had been convicted of downloading child pornography:

I mean it gets to a stage also where you are just collecting to see how many different ones you can get and this sort of thing and you're not ... necessarily aroused or turned on by all the pictures coming in...(p.11)

Quayle and Taylor (2003) report that as the number of images of child pornography downloaded from the Internet increases, so too does the likelihood that the individual

responsible for downloading the images will express ‘cognitions’ that objectify the subjects of the images. In such cases, the images cease to be described in terms of the children and sexual acts or scenarios portrayed in their content and are instead described simply as “pictures” or “images”, series numbers, views (eg. frontals), states (eg. panties), or usage (eg. visual aids). Whether as a means of justify their activities or as an indication of their perception of the material, it is striking that several of the men who were interviewed by Quayle and Taylor (2002a) were reported to have stated that they did not relate the images to people but simply viewed them as “flat objects”.

In line with Lannings (1992) reference to the personal significance of saved items, interviews undertaken by Quayle and Taylor (2003) indicate that collectors of child pornography view their collections as important because the material content is perceived to be under their control. This conceptualisation of collections as a source of personal control is consistent with research evidence obtained from samples of individuals who have been clinically identified as demonstrating abnormally high levels of collecting behaviour (Coles, Frost, Heimberg and Steketee, 2003).

‘Normal’ and ‘Abnormal’ Collecting Behaviour

Psychological literature pertaining to the concept of collecting suggests that such behaviour is normal (Greenberg, Witztum and Levy, 1991). Animal research shows that prior experience in retrieving an object that has provided some form of reinforcement may lead to ongoing retrieval of the same object even after the reinforcement offered by that object declines (Wallace, 1995). However, very little appears to be known about the incidence of collecting in ‘mainstream’ human populations.

Although noteworthy, results obtained from animal research may be questioned in terms of their generalisability to human populations, especially given the diverse range of objects which humans have been known to collect and the lack of any obvious positive reinforcement associated with some of these (eg. airline sickbags) (Pearce, 1991). Furthermore, given that the animal research makes no attempt to differentiate between degrees of persistence in collecting behaviour and the effects of such persistence on the subject's social or physical well-being, any conclusions drawn from such research are inevitably limited in their applicability.

In contrast to the dearth of research concerning “normal” collecting behaviour amongst humans, a growing body of research has come to focus on the concept of “abnormal” collecting behaviour, or what psychologists and psychiatrists call “hoarding”. Within psychological literature, hoarding has been defined as “the acquisition of and failure to discard possessions of little use or value” (Frost and Gross, 1993, p. 367). Variations on this definition exist, many of which refer to experiences of “distress or impairment in functioning” resulting from the hoarding behaviours (eg. Frost and Hartl, 1995, p341), however, the basic concepts of acquiring and failing to discard items are common to most. Generally, hoarding is considered to be symptomatic of other problems experienced by an individual and has been empirically related to residing in circumstances of extreme social instability and uncertainty (Shevchenko, 2002; Zemach, 1991; cited in Milgram, 1993), such as war and political unease. Nevertheless, Frost and Hartl (1995) emphasise that such experiences are by no means common to all ‘hoarders’.

Clinically, hoarding behaviours are recognised as being associated with obsessive-compulsive personality disorders (OCD) (March and Leonard, 1996; Summerfeldt, Richter, Antony and Swinson, 1999; Valente, 2002). Therefore, much of the research considering these behaviours has focused on clinically identified populations of individuals suffering from obsessive-compulsive disorders. Similarly, research that has involved non-clinical populations has tended to relate the cognitions and behaviours of these individuals to cognitive deficits, and physical and psychological conditions (eg. Coles et al, 2003; Steketee, Frost, and Kim, 2001). According to clinical definitions, hoarding involves saving of any item, and clinical populations are commonly assessed on the basis of whether they hoard every item that they come in contact with. Research focusing on the hoarding of a specific class of item is extremely rare.

It would be highly presumptuous to imagine that every individual who collects and saves child pornography is suffering from OCD or any other clinical condition. Similarly, although the collections of some child pornography consumers have been reported to reach sizable proportions (Carr, 2004; Quayle and Taylor, 2002a; Taylor and Quayle, 2003), it is unclear whether their behaviour could legitimately be referred to as “hoarding”. Nevertheless, recognition of the clinical conditions associated with hoarding may provide some insight into the reasons why individuals collect such material and the consequences of their collecting behaviour.

For instance, studies of both clinical and non-clinical populations have shown that hoarding behaviours may result less from a desire to accumulate possessions than from an inability or unwillingness to part from them. Specifically, Frost and Hartl (1996) identify decision making problems, fears that discarding an item may lead to negative consequences, and fears that discarding an item may impact negatively on the item itself as sources of a failure to discard items. Similarly, in a study examining the hoarding behaviours of a large non-clinical sample of college students, Coles et al (2003) found that failure to discard collected items was strongly related to beliefs about the possessions being hoarded. This finding replicated an earlier study by Steketee, Frost and Kyrios (2003) that specifically linked hoarding related thoughts with hoarding related actions as support for a cognitive behavioural model of hoarding. In the research undertaken by Coles et al (2003) the relationship between cognitions about the importance of hoarded items and difficulties discarding these items was found to be particularly strong and to exist independently of the influence of OCD or depressive symptoms.

Evidence obtained from research considering the behaviours of child pornography collectors also suggests that one of the mechanisms that drives the accumulation of images of child pornography is the collector's unwillingness to part with previously acquired material (Lanning, 1992; Quayle and Taylor; 2002a). Various researchers have commented on the extent to which collectors of child pornography will go to ensure the permanence of their collections. For example, Lanning (1992) states that these individuals may move, hide, or give their collections away if they are in fear of detection, but rarely will they destroy them. Although Quayle and Taylor (2002a) cite cases in

which individuals in possession of child pornography reported purposefully culling their electronic collections, in very few of these was all associated material deleted or discarded. Indeed, during an interview undertaken as part of Quayle and Taylor's research into the behaviours of individuals who had been convicted for downloading child pornography, one participant was reported to have indicated that despite intentions to "rid" his computer of the incriminating evidence he found that he could never bring himself to do so.

I was thinking I might as well get shot of these now... but there's a thing at the back of your mind... well, I'll do it tomorrow, do it tomorrow and tomorrow never comes
(p. 343)

Another of Quayle and Taylor's (2002a) interview participants stated that he spent most of his free time devising ways of evading law enforcement and securing his collection. Similarly, Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2005) noted that individuals who had the largest collections of child pornography images were most likely to organise these collections and to take measures to securely protect them. In turn, Lanning describes how an offender actually willed his collection to a friend, while another, having being apprehended for possession of child pornography and knowing that he would never have his collection returned, went to the prosecutor's office to put his images in covers and dividers so that they would be protected (Lanning, 1992, p. 30).

Internet ‘Addiction’, ‘Compulsive’ Collecting and ‘Problematic’ Internet Use

A number of researchers have identified the potential for the Internet to serve as an alternative to, or escape from an emotionally distressing or mundane reality (Cooper, Galbreath and Becker, 2004; Hills and Argyle, 2002; Kennedy-Souza, 1998; Morahan-Martin and Schumacher, 2000; Perse and Dunn, 1998). For some, it is claimed that this appeal may result in behaviours that have been variously referred to as ‘Internet addiction’, ‘excessive Internet use’, ‘compulsive Internet use’, ‘problematic Internet use’, and ‘maladaptive Internet use’ (Caplan, 2002; Cooper, Galbreath and Becker, 2004; Davis, 2001; Griffiths, 2001; Kandell, 1998; Quayle, Vaughan and Taylor, 2006; Young, 1996). Although the concept of ‘Internet addiction’ per se has been heavily criticised, most commonly because it does not account for what individual ‘addicts’ are actually using the Internet to do and therefore does not distinguish between behaviours associated with the Internet and those associated with Internet enabled activities; the idea that some individuals demonstrate unhealthy or problematic levels of Internet involvement remains (Beard and Wolf, 2001; Caplan, 2002; Davis, 2001; Griffiths, 1999, 2000a).

Problematic Internet use tends to be defined in terms of cognitions and behaviours associated with Internet use that negatively impact an individual’s life outcomes (Cooper, Scherer, Boies and Gordon, 1999; Griffiths, 1996a, 1996b, 2000b). For example, an individual may come to engage in Internet based activities to avoid addressing difficulties or problems in his or her off-line life and may allow these problems to grow out of proportion. Alternatively, an individual may seek on-line companionship as an alternative to unsatisfactory off-line relationships and the potential incompatibility between on and

off-line sexual interactions may further reduce the likelihood that he or she will find off-line partners who meet his or her needs (Cooper, Galbreath and Becker, 2004).

In line with these examples, Kraut, Kiesler, Boneva, Cummings, Helgeson and Crawford (2002) and Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukopadhyay and Scherlis (1998) have shown that over a two-year period, time spent using the Internet was positively correlated with the number of life stressors experienced by research participants. They conclude that as the amount of time and energy that an individual gives to on-line activities increases, the amount of time and energy available to other relationships and activities decreases, and the quality and quantity of these relationships suffer (Kraut et al, 1998). While additional research has shown that the reverse may apply if individuals have strong social networks prior to engaging in on-line activity (Kraut et al, 2002), the trend to decreased off-line involvement was replicated for those who do not have strong social support networks. For individuals who go on-line to avoid issues associated with an interest in the content of objectionable material, it is unlikely that other forms of social support regarding this activity will be particularly strong. Indeed, research undertaken by Quayle and Taylor (2003) specifically in relation to individuals who use the Internet to access child pornography supports the findings of Kraut et al (1998, 2002). Furthermore, Kraut et al (2002) found that, irrespective of involvement with external social networks, increased Internet use was associated with decreased commitment to the user's local geographic community.

Given the social stigma attached to having an interest in the sexualisation of children and other content portrayed in objectionable material, it is not unreasonable to assume that most individuals who demonstrate such an interest will experience some level of associated emotional distress. In addition to providing access to objectionable material that can be used to gratify an interest in its content; these individuals may also receive reinforcement as a result of the Internet experience providing them with an escape from this distress. In turn, the likelihood that they will dedicate increasing amounts of time to involvement with this medium, to the detriment of other aspects of their lives, would appear high. Furthermore, even in the event that individuals who demonstrate an interest in the content of objectionable material do not actively use the Internet to access this material (eg. if they are avoiding acknowledgement of the issue), the likely development of problematic Internet activity may contribute to the likelihood of future access occurring.

Cooper, Scherer, Boies, and Gordon (1999) found that individuals who experienced negative life effects as a result of the hours they invest in on-line sexual pursuits²⁶ were more likely than those who did not experience these difficulties to report high use of the Internet in relation to non-sexual activities. Although representing only eight percent of a sample of individuals who used the Internet for sexual pursuits, they were more likely than other research participants to report spending in excess of 30 hours engaged in any type of on-line activity each week. A high level of time investment in on-line sexual activities was identified as more than 11 hours of such involvement. Further analysis of this dataset revealed that the majority (80.5 percent) of men who believed that their on-

²⁶ Including the consumption of both non-objectionable and objectionable sexually explicit material.

line pursuit of sexual activity interfered with other areas of their lives stated that they used the Internet to “distract themselves or have a break from off-line activities” (Cooper, Galbreath and Becker, 2004). In addition, 56.5 percent stated that they went on-line to “deal with stress”. In line with these findings, Chaney and Chang’s (2005) review of related research highlights the non-sexual needs commonly served by on-line sexual behaviour between men. This review suggests an association between boredom proneness, social disconnectedness and online sexual behaviour.

Only, 43 percent of the men sampled by Cooper, Galbreath and Becker (2004) reported pursuing online sexual involvement for the express purpose of “engaging in sexual activity that they would not do in real time”. Although limited in terms of knowing whether non sexual Internet activity preceded or followed sexual Internet activity, these results suggest that non-sexual involvement contributes to the reinforcement associated with sexual involvement and, in turn, to the development of problematic Internet behaviours. Chaney and Chang (2005) suggest that personal dissociation within the Internet environment may even facilitate engagement in online sexual activity, despite a lack of sexual motives for doing so.

Specialised Versus Generalised Problematic Internet Use - Instrumental versus Ritualised Media Use

According to Davis (2001), cognitions and behaviours associated with problematic Internet use may focus on a very specific aspect of Internet involvement, or they may generalise to any type of Internet involvement. As such, individuals may choose to engage in media related activities for the express purpose of obtaining access to a specific

type of media content, or they may do so because they perceive intrinsic rewards in the media experience itself. The results of Cooper, Galbreath and Becker's (2004) analysis of the motivations associated with problematic Internet use suggest that most of the individuals who identified negative personal consequences resulting from on-line pursuit of sexual activity tended to demonstrate generalised motives for such activity. Specifically, they engaged with the medium because it provided a distraction or relief from other activities. Only those who went on-line to engage in behaviours related to sexual activities that they would not engage in off-line could be said to demonstrate a specialised focus to their behaviour.

Davis' (2001) dichotomy of specialised versus generalised Internet related cognitions and behaviours reflects the results of research undertaken within the uses and gratifications model of media involvement showing that different individuals develop particular orientations towards media use, such that their engagement may be defined as either instrumental or ritualised (Rubin, 2002). Rubin (2002, p535) states that instrumental media use involves seeking particular media content for the purpose of obtaining a specific type of information. In contrast, ritualised media use involves the habitual use of a specific medium to consume time and for diversion. While ritualised media use is associated with high levels of exposure to various media content and a particular affinity to the medium of choice, instrumental use is said to be more likely to be spread across a range of mediums, and associated with more active and purposive selection of content, greater attention to the media content, and more significant involvement in the media experience. According to Rubin (2002) the difference between ritualised and instrumental

media orientation is of particular relevance to understanding the way in which different individuals engage with different types of media and media content because it relates to differences in the attitudes that individuals hold about the media and their expectations of it (Rubin, 2002, p. 534). This distinction may also contribute to an understanding of the mechanisms through which specialised and generalised problematic Internet behaviour develops and the differential effects that such behaviours appear to have on the lives of those involved.

Instrumental media use has been shown to be associated with the reinforcement of existing beliefs about specific issues or behaviour (McQuail, 2000). Indeed, research has shown that instrumental media consumers perceive media content to be more realistic than ritualised users (Rubin, 2002). In accordance with the uses and gratifications framework, it is suggested that individuals who seek a particular type of information/utility from media experiences will purposively select media content that supports their view or interest in the information or utility concerned. Through such engagement the view or interest becomes strengthened and contributes to the individual engaging in other activities associated with that view or interest, including further selective media engagement.

Research undertaken within the uses and gratifications framework of media involvement suggests that, when a need or motive can only be satisfied by a narrow range of information seeking strategies, instrumental media use may lead to media dependency (Rubin, 2002). In cases of media dependency, individuals come to rely on the information

generated by the media and this information is likely to have a significant influence on their attitudes and behaviours (Bargh, McKenna and Fitzsimons, 2002; Miller and Reese, 1982, cited in Rubin, 2002). As stated by Surrette (1998), people use knowledge that they gain from personal experience, interactions with other people and institutions, and the media, to create their own pictures of reality upon which they base their actions and activities. As other sources of information become less available, the information obtained from the mass media becomes more important. In line with this conclusion, the likelihood that media dependency will occur is said to be mediated by the availability of functional alternatives to the media experience (Rosengren and Windahl, 1972; cited in Rubin, 2002). As such, the media experience is not valued per se, but rather the outcomes of that experience. Where these outcomes may be readily achieved through other types of activity, media involvement will decline. If no functional alternatives exist, however, the interest that the instrumental media consumer seeks to fulfil via media use and the reinforcement obtained as a result of this process will lead to increased involvement with the media content. In terms of the use of the Internet medium to obtain objectionable material, the availability of functional alternatives is likely to be limited and ongoing involvement is likely to be high.

In contrast to instrumental media use, ritualised orientations towards media activity are less focused on obtaining information pertaining to pre-existing interests and more focused on obtaining distraction or relief from pre-existing conditions. Such involvement may be conceptualised as demonstrating a preference for the media environment over the non media environment rather than a functional alternative to it (Caplan, 2002). In turn,

ritualised media use is said to have a weaker effect on non-media behaviour than instrumental media use (Kim and Rubin, 1997; Perse, 1990; Rubin, 2002). In the case of the Internet, motives associated with ritualised media use have been found to be significantly associated with individuals using interactive Internet applications to engage in social interaction (Flaherty, Pearce and Rubin, 1998; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). Although individuals who demonstrate instrumental orientations to media use also make use of interactive Internet applications, in line with the majority of Internet users (Kraut et al, 2002; Scherer, 1997; Wolak, Mitchell and Finkelhor 2002), they tend to employ these applications for the purpose of maintaining relationships with off-line associates. In turn, those who demonstrate an ritual orientation tend to employ interactive applications for the express purpose of meeting and engaging with new acquaintances. Ritualised Internet use is also associated with spending more time using the Internet than instrumental Internet use (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). Notably, Cooper, Galbreath and Becker (2004) identified an association between individuals experiencing negative consequences as a result of their high hours spent on-line and use of Interactive internet applications. Similar associations are also reported in research undertaken by Davis, Flett and Besser (2002) and Scherer (1997).

Caplan (2002) indicates that 'generalised' Internet users are more likely than specialised users to demonstrate thoughts about the Internet that may be defined as obsessive in nature, on-line impulse control problems, a sense of guilt in relation to their Internet use, and increased positive perceptions in relation to their on-line as opposed to off-line self. In turn, these feelings and the behaviours associated with them may negatively influence

off-line relationships (Quayle, Vaughan and Taylor 2006; Taylor and Quayle, 2003). Similar results have been obtained from a sample of college students in a study undertaken by Scherer (1997). In this study, individuals who used the widest range of Internet applications (eg. Newsgroups, games, IRC, multi-user dungeons and bulletin board systems as well as more commonly used applications such as email and the World Wide Web) were most likely to indicate that they believed that their Internet use interfered with their day to day lives and to state that they did not feel like they had control over their Internet activities. Although Scherer found no difference between the amount of time that problematic and non-problematic Internet users spent on-line, she did find that problematic Internet users were more likely than others to socialise on-line than face-to-face.

Unlike other mediums, use of the Internet as a distraction or relief from real world stressors is implicitly reinforcing, especially where these motives include a desire for social interaction. The nature of the medium means that whenever an individual wishes to use it to this end, it will be available and others will be on-line, including others who may also share their motivation for on-line activity. Where the issue that is being avoided is particularly stressful (such as the dissonance an individual who experiences a sexual interest in children may feel in relation to other social relationships and sexual experiences) the positive reinforcement gained through the availability of this alternative social environment may lead to increasing time spent engaged with it. Furthermore, in the case of individuals who are motivated to go on-line in order to distract themselves from issues associated with an interest in activities portrayed as the content of objectionable

material, on-line access to such content may further reinforce on-line behaviour (Quayle, Vaughan and Taylor, 2006). Indeed, as a result of research regarding the development of problematic Internet behaviour, Young (1997) identified three primary needs motivating computer-mediated communication; social support, sexual fulfilment and creation of a persona or identity.

Quayle, Vaughan and Taylor (2006) suggest that as involvement with the Internet medium continues, generalised involvement may also foster media dependency such that individuals come to see it as their main form of social and sexual reinforcement. In contrast to dependency based on instrumental use, however, involvement is unlikely to be influenced by functional alternatives as the time and energy dedicated to the activity preclude any such alternatives from being identified. At the same time, in order to maintain active associations with others involved in the trade of objectionable material, research undertaken by Linehan, Quayle, Holland and Taylor (in press) suggests that individuals may feel compelled to acquire ever increasing numbers of objectionable images.

Collecting Objectionable Material as a Social Activity

Applied to the collection of objectionable material, behaviours associated with generalised problematic Internet involvement suggest that some individuals may be motivated to pursue increased access to objectionable material by social affiliations with others involved in this activity. In support of this conclusion, Quayle and Taylor (2002a) report that some individuals acquire and save material that they do not find appealing but that they believe might be of value to someone else and therefore useful in trading or in

fostering relationships formed through trading activities. They also report cases of individuals who stated that they gained significant pleasure from organising and categorising their collections of objectionable material. Quayle and Taylor (2002a) found that individuals who were actively involved in social interaction with others through the Internet based trade of child pornography were more likely to demonstrate advanced organisational systems than those who did not engage in on-line social interaction. Once sorted, it was observed that, with the exception of retrieving images for trading, these child pornography collectors made very little use of their collections, preferring instead to focus their attention on the accumulation of new material to add to them (see also Taylor and Quayle, 2003).

Quayle and Taylor's (2002a) observations are consistent with behavioural reports offered by collectors of other, non-objectionable, objects (see, for example, Tashiro, 1997). As indicated by McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004), many collectors identify the 'thrill of the hunt' and feelings of achievement resulting from the acquisition of a sought item as significant motivators for their collecting behaviour. The acquisition of a sought item is said to bolster an individual's sense of self, compensate for perceived inadequacies in other aspects of his or her life, and be reinforced by positive feedback from, and increased sense of community with, other collectors.

In line with the concept of collecting behaviours being (at least partly) motivated by a desire to establish social relationships with like minded others, individuals involved in the social interaction surrounding the Internet based trade in child pornography

frequently report a decline in collecting behaviour once they establish a personal 'sense of belonging to an on-line community' (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a; Taylor and Quayle, 2003). Once this sense of belonging is established, these individuals describe their ongoing involvement in the collection of child pornography as largely limited to trading between members of their on-line social group. In such cases, items are only selected if they precisely fit the collector's fantasy scenario or if it is anticipated that they will be of value to another individual known to the collector through on-line trading activities. In turn, well established groups of 'seasoned' traders are found to demonstrate highly exclusive and insular on-line networks, offering only limited access to new members and encouraging current members to maintain their affiliation by providing them with highly specific material that fulfils their fantasy scenarios.

Like off-line communities, collectors of child pornography have been found to operate through and attend to socially defined 'values' such that membership to a particular Internet based group of traders is dependent on individuals trading material that the group considers 'worthy' and does not go against the groups sense of 'moral' values. As stated by one participant in the research undertaken by Quayle and Taylor (2002a, p. 14):

...if you wanted to be a member of a group ... you just popped into the channel and started trading and if you traded correctly ... and you didn't abuse other users ... and you didn't trade crap basically ... and you didn't trade snuff or anything that showed kids actively being hurt ...

In relation to this quote it is noteworthy that the speaker refers to individuals entering the channel to become a member of a group as opposed to entering for the purpose of trading child pornography. Furthermore, Quayle and Taylor are not the only researchers to identify the social significance of the collecting phenomenon. The findings of early research considering non-electronic collections of child pornography led Hartman and Burgess (1984) to suggest the need to distinguish between individuals who share the contents of their collections with others and those who don't. Similarly, the concept of collecting as a socially meaningful activity has also been identified in analyses of the processes involved in developing other types of collections. For instance, Brown (1997) conceives of comic book fandom as "a legitimate cultural expression" and the collection of comic books as a means of constructing "a meaningful sense of self" through social identification with others who share the collector's interest. He states that through participation in this culture, comic book fans gain access to a shared knowledge and belief structure regarding the communally acknowledged value of particular examples of the material under consideration. This information guides future collecting behaviour and in doing so, both reinforces and expresses the collector's sense of social solidarity with other comic book fans.

Although the collection of comic books and other 'innocuous' articles appears outwardly different from the collection of objectionable material, it is noteworthy that several of the individuals identified by Quayle and Taylor, (2002a) as being involved in accessing child pornography via on-line networks compared their trading activities with the processes involved in trading other commodities such as baseball cards or art. In turn, Brown

(1997) reports that participation in comic book collector's conferences and during interaction at comic book specialty stores enhances the sense of solidarity and community between comic book collectors. Like trading objectionable material via on-line networks, both of these activities provide an opportunity to obtain more of the collected material. While the acquisition of knowledge and a common value system provides the "cultural capital" of comic book collecting, Brown states that the comic book itself (like the images traded during the collection of child pornography) provides the hard currency that supports the social system involved. He suggests that this sense of currency imbues comic book collecting with all the class based distinctions and strivings of other cultural economies. Consequently, the drive for individual collectors to acquire new comic books results in ever changing social relationships between those involved in the collecting community and prevents the community from succumbing to stagnation.

While reading the comic is obviously fundamental to comic fans on an individual basis, it is the possession of the actual comic that acts as the focal point for the entire community (Brown, 1997, p. 21).

Social Currency and Social Credibility

Within the context of the trade in child pornography, the concept of child pornography as currency may have even greater social implications than in the world of comic book collecting (certainly, there is no denying that it has greater implications outside of this world). While comic book collectors may regard the subject of their collecting behaviours as a form of capital, acquisition of comic books continues to involve the

exchange of financial resources. Child pornography collectors, however, commonly pay for their acquisitions with child pornography. This process is of particular importance because it appears to be instrumental in facilitating trust and social cohesion between those involved by requiring both parties to any transaction to place themselves at risk of being detected as a supplier of child pornography (Taylor, 1999; Taylor and Quayle, 2003). Becoming involved in such an exchange also demonstrates that each party is already in possession of at least some illicit material and sharing this material provides the trading partners with credibility within the larger Internet based community of like minded individuals (Taylor, Quayle and Holland, 2001). Furthermore, research has shown that when such activity results in an individual being identified as having a large collection of child pornography, and distributing rare or highly valued images, it can also imbue them with significant social status within the wider on-line community (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a; Taylor and Quayle, 2003). Similarly, Quayle and Taylor (2002a) cite the case of one collector of child pornography who believed that his on-line social status had been improved as a result of his relationship with an individual who used his own children to produce unique examples of objectionable material.

As identified in relation to comic book collectors, Internet based research suggests that on-line communities demonstrate highly specific group dynamics and cultural or class based distinctions (Evans, 2001; Lamb, 1998). Within the context of communities organised around the exchange of child pornography, Linehan et al (in press) suggest that these dynamics directly relate to expressions of status, expertise and apprenticeships. Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) note that the on-line credibility of child pornography

traders is enhanced by contributions to the community such as sharing knowledge about the Internet and the most effective ways to use it, including tips on protecting collections of child pornography and avoiding detection by law enforcement authorities. In some cases, such tips have been known to extend to advice on how to make contact with real children (Quayle and Taylor, 2003).

In addition to providing on-line credibility, the sharing of information, knowledge and the ability to acquire specific examples of objectionable material has also been found to be personally reinforcing for those who engage in such activities. As indicated by Quayle and Taylor (2003), individuals who had been convicted for downloading child pornography often state that their collections of child pornography and their ability to provide 'valued' images to others who were interested in particular examples of the genre gave them a feeling of importance. As with comic book collectors, this sense of 'being important' is further developed through community feedback identifying the images that they provided as 'socially desirable commodities' (Quayle and Taylor, 2003, p. 1). As stated by one of the offenders interviewed as part of the research undertaken by Quayle and Taylor (2002a):

Well like I said I was very good at finding people to trade with. I was a good negotiator so to speak and I would tend to find pictures... I managed to find the whole series from somebody and I let the channel operators know... and they were deeply grateful. Its kind of like an art collector who finds a lost Picasso (p. 14).

Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) and Taylor (1999) also highlight the sense of empowerment and mastery that some individuals receive from developing skill in the use of the Internet itself.

Social Support and Social Influence

The behavioural significance of the social credibility and support provided through on-line networks to individuals with a sexual interest in children and/or other practices commonly portrayed in objectionable material cannot be underestimated. As stated by McGrath and Casey (2002), the Internet provides a meeting place for previously isolated sexual predators who, by way of on-line interaction, are able to gain support for their interest; support that has the potential to encourage some individuals to act out fantasies that would otherwise remain dormant. Surette (1998) contends that “individuals with access to similar knowledge and who frequently interact with one another tend to construct similar social realities”. He argues that this form of social development is particularly likely when interaction involves the “vicarious” sharing of the reality of significant others through symbolic expression that allows the creation of abstract ideas. By definition, abstraction fosters a process of subjective interpretation and by definition, photographed images or written content imply abstraction.

Within mainstream society those who demonstrate a social or sexual interest in the activities portrayed as the subject of objectionable material are generally shunned. Prior to the Internet, such treatment may have served to limit the reinforcement associated with accessing such material. However, within the context of an on-line community dedicated

to the trade of objectionable material individuals who demonstrate such behaviour may be held up as an example.

The potential for positive feedback provided as a result of on-line interactions to significantly influence future behaviour is demonstrated in a study examining the Internet activities of individuals identified as demonstrating concealable marginal identities (such as sexual orientation), 'unconcealable' marginal identity characteristics (such as obesity, stuttering, acne) or mainstream identities. McKenna and Bargh (1998) found that individuals who identified themselves with concealable marginal identities tended to engage more actively in identity related newsgroups than individuals with unconcealable marginal identity characteristics or mainstream identities. Their results revealed that for individuals who self identified with a socially marginalised concealable sexual identity (eg. homosexuality, bondage, or spanking) involvement in an Internet discussion group was significantly influenced by the nature of on-line feedback. Positive feedback from other members of the newsgroup resulted in an increased number of postings to the group, whilst negative feedback led to a reduction in the frequency of posting. This form of social influence was not observed for individuals with unconcealable or mainstream identities. Furthermore, the greater the number of postings that individuals with concealable marginal identities submitted to these groups, the more important the individuals marginalised sexual identity became to them, the greater their acceptance of it, and the greater the likelihood that they would attempt to share it with off-line associates. However, for individuals involved in mainstream Internet discussion groups

and groups focused on non-concealable marginalised identities these effects were not observed.

McKenna and Bargh (1998) interpret their findings in terms of an “identity demarginalisation” process. They suggest that where individuals previously felt isolated and different, participation in a group of similar others create changes in ones personal identity, including the adoption of group norms that encourage positive feedback and the acquisition of a positive group identity. According to Hogg and Abrams (1990, 1993) reduction of uncertainty is a powerful motivator for group identification. It is hypothesised that subjective uncertainty arises when individuals try to make sense of and understand particular aspects of their world for which they have no relevant points of reference. Within this context, understanding is achieved by way of social consensus regarding the issue at hand. Therefore, individuals are motivated to seek out others who they believe possess relevant information and whom they perceive as being similar to themselves. Reduction of uncertainty has been found to result in an increased sense of self-efficacy and control, as well as enhanced mood and feelings of self-esteem (Deaux, 1996). Furthermore, the reinforcing nature of uncertainty reduction is said to contribute to individuals generating categories and internalising prototypes consistent with the attitudes and identities of others who they identify as relevant social reference points (Hogg and Abrams, 1993). Given the socially interactive nature of many applications used within the Internet environment, the concept and processes of uncertainty reduction support the possibility that some individuals who express an interest in the content of

objectionable material, but are unable to identify alternative avenues for expressing this interest, may come to depend on the Internet medium as a source of social reinforcement.

Collected Items, Collective Identity

The provision of social support for individuals with marginalised social identities might be considered positive under other circumstances, however, where the reason for their marginalisation is questionable so too is likely to be the type of support that they receive. In the case of individuals who demonstrate a specific interest in accessing child pornography, research undertaken by Quayle and Taylor (2002a, 2003) and Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) demonstrates that during the process of collecting objectionable material, and to some degree as a result of reinforcement obtained through sharing their collections, individuals come to develop social skills and confidence on-line that may well have been absent during their off-line encounters. At the same time they come to identify with their on-line associates and are socialised by them (Quayle and Taylor, 2003).

Spears, Postmes, Lea and Wolbert (2002, p. 94) suggest “there are important group dimensions to self and social interaction...the group is not just an external entity or collection of individuals with whom we interact, but is also internal and identity defining.” Aspects of group-based interaction are believed to influence individuals by implicating them as members of groups or social categories. In turn, group membership implies and infers specific roles and responsibilities to others who share the group’s identity. Therefore, in contrast to arguments that social behaviour becomes deregulated under the relatively anonymous conditions of Internet based interaction (eg. McGrath and

Casey, 2002; Turkle, 1997), Spears et al (2002) argue for a depersonalisation model of Internet involvement. They support this argument with the results of research showing that the perceived anonymity of the medium actually increases the salience and impact of social cues transmitted via the Internet and that social influence is actually stronger during computer mediated communication than face-to-face communication. Furthermore, under experimental conditions, Spears et al found that the power of on-line social influence increased over time and was mediated by the development of a sense of social hierarchy.

Within the context of the on-line trade in objectionable material, this social influence may also lead to changes in the type of material made available on-line; bringing it inline with electronically generated group norms. Barron and Kimmel (2000, p. 163) propose that the specific social elements of the Usenet actually “tailor it for a specific type of pornographic representation”. They suggest that through involvement in the Internet based trade of objectionable material on-line associates communicate their own version of a perceived ideal social environment. Whether this ideal involves the sexualisation of children, the rape and subjugation of women, or simply pertains to social and sexual anarchy, as with all ideologies this communicative process facilitates a sense of social in-group affiliation based on agreement with the content of the material and reinforced by animosity towards a perceived out-group who do not agree with this content. Collectors consider others who select the same type of material as them positively whilst viewing those who select different types of material in a negative light. In turn, they tend to limit their on-line interactions and trading activities to the former.

Working for Social In-groups

Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) indicate that the child pornography collections found in the possession of individuals convicted of offences associated with downloading and trading such material are rarely random. Rather, they tend to portray specific types of children (eg. showing children of particular ages or of a particular gender) engaged in a specific types of activity (eg. oral sex, anal sex, penetrative sex, masturbation, bestiality, urination). Since 1997, the staff of the COPINE Project at the University College of Cork have maintained a database of child pornography collected from Internet Newsgroups dedicated to serving individuals with a sexual interest in children (Taylor and Quayle, 2003; Taylor, Quayle and Holland, 2001).

Analysis of contents of the COPINE database has resulted in the identification of 10 distinct categories of child pornography. These range from naturalist type images of children that are not explicitly sexual and may have been either commercially, informally or surreptitiously acquired, through to images of penetrative sex involving children and on to images that show children being subjected to acts of sadism or bestiality (Taylor, Holland and Quayle, 2001). Taylor, Holland and Quayle (2001) state that the order of these categories (as listed in Table 1) implies increasing levels of severity; as determined by the level of victimisation portrayed. They believe that the conceptualisation of child pornography in terms of a continuum they are able to demonstrate the psychological process underlying the generation of sexual fantasies involving children. That such fantasies frequently involve storylines may necessitate that individuals interested in using child pornography to stimulate fantasies acquire pictures from a range of categories.

Series' of images collected from Usenet groups demonstrate this phenomenon well. Taylor and Quayle (2003) state that collectors of child pornography rarely restrict their collecting activities to any single category within the continuum. They suggest that this is especially true for categories identified at the lowest levels of the continuum. However, individuals do appear to demonstrate consistency in terms of the highest level of the continuum to which the images that they collect conform. For instance, one individual may collect images of children performing sexual activities on other children but consider images of adults performing sexual activities on children abhorrent. Another may 'draw the line' at sadistic images or images involving bestiality.

Table 1: "A typology of paedophile picture collections" (Taylor, Holland and Quayle, 2001; p.5)

Level	Label	Description of Picture Qualities
1	Indicative	Non-erotic and non-sexualised pictures showing children in their underwear, swimming costumes, etc. from either commercial sources or family albums; pictures of children playing in normal settings, in which the context or organisation of pictures by the collector indicates inappropriateness
2	Nudist	Pictures of naked or semi-naked children in appropriate nudist settings, an from legitimate sources
3	Erotica	Surreptitiously taken photographs of children in play areas or other safe environments showing either underwear or varying degrees of nakedness.
4	Posing	Deliberately posed pictures of children fully, partially clothed or naked (where the amount, context and organisation suggests sexual interest)
5	Erotic Posing	Deliberately posed pictures of fully, partially clothed or naked children in sexualised or provocative poses
6	Explicit Erotic Posing	Emphasising genital areas where the child is either naked, partially or fully clothed
7	Explicit Sexual Activity	Involves touching, mutual and self masturbation, oral sex and intercourse by child, not involving an adult
8	Assault	Pictures of children being exposed to sexual assault, involving digital touching, involving an adult
9	Gross Assault	Grossly obscene pictures of sexual assault, involving penetrative sex, masturbation or oral sex involving an adult
10	Sadistic/Bestiality	Pictures showing a child being tied, bound, beaten, whipped or otherwise subject to something that implies pain Pictures where an animal is involved in some form of sexual behaviour with a child.

In line with these findings, Taylor and Quayle (2003) and Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) argue that different groups of collectors demonstrate what may be referred to as

specific ‘moral codes’ that define their collecting and trading behaviour. The research undertaken by Quayle and Taylor (2002a) showed that these often relate to the age or gender of the children involved, with some individuals stating that sexual activities involving penetration of a girl is acceptable but penetration of a boy is not, or alternatively that it is acceptable if the child is aged over 8 years old but not if they are under that age. Notably, most collectors of child pornography appear to distinguish between images of apparently ‘happy’ children and children who do not appear to be ‘enjoying’ the sexual attention they receive. This distinction is interpreted as assisting offenders to reduce the cognitive dissonance that they may feel with regards to their interest in the content of objectionable material by inferring that children are consenting to the sexual activity portrayed in this material. In turn, children’s ‘consent’ (or lack of resistance) to sexual involvement is perceived to undermine claims that such involvement may cause them harm.

In addition to such ‘moral’ distinctions individual collectors of child pornography have also been found to trade, collect and organise their material on the basis of ‘themes’. For instance, research involving the analysis of collections of objectionable material confiscated from individuals during the process of legal investigation shows that some individuals only collect images that portray a highly specific type of activity or view (Carr, 2004). According to Carr (2004), examples of such specific content include collections comprising solely of images showing vaginal impaling, extreme close-ups of genitalia, urination and/or defecation activities, bestiality involving one specific breed of dog, or violent sexual imagery. Furthermore, the research undertaken by Carr

demonstrated that fixation on such specific themes often extend beyond the collection of child pornography such that collectors may also accumulate images that show adults engaged in the activity that appears to motivate their interest. In the case of those collecting particularly violent or degrading imagery, the individuals portrayed in the images were often found to be of a specific gender, but age was not always a consideration. Indeed, Carr's research suggests that individuals who collect extremely violent imagery tend to collect all such imagery, regardless of whether or not it involves sexual acts. In contrast, other groups of offenders appear to focus specifically on material showing individuals of a specific age. For instance, an individual may collect any image portraying a two year old male, regardless of the activity portrayed.

Given the range of individual interests in objectionable material identified by both Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) and Carr (2004), and the highly specific nature of some of these interests, in some cases the number of individuals who share a particular interest is likely to be limited. In turn, if these individuals only trade with each other, their collections of objectionable material are also likely to be limited. Given the effects of habituation described by Taylor (1999) it is possible that if an individual is unable to obtain new material to feed a personal interest in the content, their desire for such material may be extinguished. Indeed, historically, advocates of pornographic censorship have identified this possibility as support for their political activities. However, as stated by Barron and Kimmel, one of the most notable differences between pre and post Internet distribution of such material is the lack of role definition between consumers and producers of objectionable material. They argue that where an in-group has been

established in relation to the trade of a specific type of material, the socially reinforcing nature of the group's activities may compel individual group members to engage in the production of objectionable material for the purpose of continuing on-line association. Indeed, even when a specific type of material is not 'in short supply', given that group based social reinforcement is frequently determined on the basis of the 'quality' of the objectionable material shared by individual group members, Barron and Kimmel argue that group members are actively encouraged to produce new examples of such material and/or material that exactly 'fits' the group ideology. In the absence of alternative sources of social reinforcement, the power of this type of encouragement may significantly influence the likelihood that group members will engage in criminally abusive activity during the production process.

Summary: The Mediating/Moderating Influence of the Internet

The literature reviewed in Chapter One demonstrates that for some individuals, media selection and use may be at least partly motivated by a desire for social interaction. Discussion of media content has been identified as instrumental in reinforcing social affiliation to others who share an interest in that content. Furthermore, media use as a catalyst for individuals to connect with others appears to be particularly appealing to individuals who have previously experienced difficulties forming social relationships. In turn, the medium used to achieve this sense of affiliation may come to be perceived as being of significant importance in terms of the development of a shared social identity, and ongoing use is encouraged.

Given that objectionable material is commonly defined as such because its content contravenes social and legal norms regarding acceptable behaviour, an interest in this content may certainly constitute grounds for social exclusion, at least in terms of the expression of the interest itself. However, while society tends to accept, or even promote social interaction regarding action films, romances, 'soap operas' or even erotica (eg. through fan clubs, magazines, newsletters), the formation of social affiliation around a shared interest in child pornography and other objectionable material has not traditionally been tolerated.

The literature reviewed in the current chapter suggests that the advent of the Internet has provided an alternative (albeit virtual) environment, exempt from the social limitations and controls of earlier communicative mediums. In this environment, individuals with a predilection towards the content of objectionable material may link with other like-minded individuals. The Internet has become one of the only avenues for those with an interest in the sexualisation children, rape and torture experiences, bestiality, necrophilia and other such activities to interact. Furthermore, the way in which Internet based interaction occurs appears to directly influence on-going involvement in associated activities. Applications available for use in the Internet environment allow individuals to engage directly with each other during the process of trading objectionable material via on-line networks. Consequently, they are able to receive simultaneous social and material reinforcement of their interest in the content of objectionable material. Together with the increased likelihood of habituation associated with the convenience of on-line acquisition of objectionable content, use of these applications may encourage the acquisition of ever

increasing amounts of objectionable material, commonly by way of additional socially interactive experiences.

As discussed in this chapter, research has shown that the more individuals involve themselves in Internet based groups, the greater their social affiliation with the groups themselves. In combination with the lack of opportunity for non-internet based discussion of objectionable content and the physically reinforcing effects of the media content itself (eg. sexual), this increased affiliation may contribute to a reduction in alternative forms of social interaction. In turn, the media consumer may come to rely on the medium and media related social interaction as his or her main source of interpersonal gratification.

In addition to the means by which objectionable material may be accessed and the social possibilities associated with the acquisition process, the Internet also differs from other forms of media in that it allows those involved to directly influence the nature of the media content available for consumption. Prior to the Internet, the financial outlay associated with producing objectionable material limited the range of content available. However, technological developments providing increased scope for involvement in production and distribution activities, at reduced cost, have led to the identification of highly specific interest groups. Furthermore, as the market for objectionable material has become more open and accessible, the incentives for financial involvement appear to have decreased and the material itself has come to represent a form of currency used to purchase additional examples of such material.

Like any market, some types of material are attributed greater value than others. In particular, material that is rare and therefore unlikely to have already resulted in habituation is prized above that which is common. Access to rare examples of objectionable material provides consumers with greater purchasing power with regards to other examples. As with financial resources, greater purchasing power is also associated with higher social status amongst others who share an interest in the relevant resource. In the case of individuals who demonstrate dependence on the medium for social reinforcement, aspirations to these sources of 'power' may contribute to increased motivation to actually produce objectionable material. Certainly, research showing that members of Internet based groups involved in trading objectionable material may 'go out of their way' to collect material that they do not find arousing but that they believe may be of interest to others with whom they associate on-line suggests that social affiliation is a powerful motivator with regards to offence behaviour.

If images of child pornography and other objectionable material are accepted (as many have argued) as visual evidence of actual abuse, the compulsion for individuals who identify with specific Internet based groups to produce material for others involved in those groups is of significant concern. Furthermore, the fact that these individuals may feel compelled to produce material to share with others in their on-line 'community' has the potential to mitigate their perceptions of traditional social sanctions against such activity. Responsibility for the production of an image may be seen to be shared between those who produce and those who demand it, as it is assumed that the latter will eventually pay for the image through production activities of their own. As shown in

social psychology experiments, shared responsibility weakens the effect of social and moral constraints on individual behaviour (See Milgram 1968, 1974).

In chapter one it was argued that the use of child pornography and other objectionable material is likely to be related to a physical or sexual interest in the activities portrayed in such material. However, a review of the relevant academic literature revealed very little evidence that the use of child pornography and other objectionable material directly influences individuals to develop or pursue their physical or sexual interests; at least not as an antecedent factor to these processes. The literature reviewed in the current chapter suggests that where motivation to engage in abuse results from the desire to produce objectionable material, involvement in on-line interaction during the process of accessing and distributing objectionable material may increase the likelihood of such activity. Furthermore, even the simple process of exchanging images of abusive activity can be viewed as perpetuating the original abuse. Similarly, morphing or changing images in a way that suggests abuse where none actually happened may still have significant consequences for those portrayed in these images, especially given the nature of the audience.

In conclusion, the literature reviewed in this chapter suggests that for some individuals the uses and gratifications that they associate with objectionable material may change over time in direct relation to social interaction occurring during the process of accessing it from the Internet. Although individuals may be initially attracted to on-line activity as a result of a pre-existing interest in the content of objectionable material, and/or stressors

associated with that interest, once involved, access to a socially supportive group of like minded others may compel increased involvement and development of offence activities.

Despite recognition of social constraints as a mediating factor in an individuals choice of media content, uses and gratifications theory does not provide significant insight into the mechanisms that determine the impact of these influences. As it stands, uses and gratifications theory does not account for social factors during the media experience (Blumler, 1985). Rather, such factors are identified as giving birth to the needs that direct gratification seeking behaviour. Blumler (1985, p. 48) states that the current model is one of adjustment; “such that the individual accommodates to environmental constraints with the help of the media”. He proposes that in order for the uses and gratifications paradigm to fully account for individual media involvement it needs to become one of integration, such that “what one is like and how one lives in certain spheres is carried over into how one uses the media”. Given the current focus on the use of the Internet for subversive activity, some light may be shed on this issue by drawing on relevant criminological theories pertaining to the role of social influence in fostering, supporting and developing deviant behaviours.

Chapter 3: Theory Revisited

In Chapter One, the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement was identified as a means for understanding individual media choices, including the use of specific types of media to strengthen social relationships and to assist with the development of group social identities. In Chapter Two, research regarding the social utility of the Internet medium was reviewed. As part of this review, the impact of on-line social relationships on the selection and consumption of objectionable material was discussed. The current chapter will attempt to draw together the research presented in the preceding chapters and develop a theoretical framework for understanding individual differences in Internet based access to objectionable material. This framework will then be used to generate hypotheses regarding the way in which these differences may impact on further offence behaviour and/or seriousness and intensity of offence behaviour.

Uses and Gratifications Revisited

According to the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement individuals will choose to engage in media related experiences if they believe that these experiences will assist them to gratify personal and/or social needs derived from, and/or influenced by, their social environment and psychological disposition. Choice of a particular medium as the vehicle for needs gratification is said to be mediated by the availability of alternative sources of gratification. Given the nature of much objectionable media content, motives driving consumption of this type of material are commonly assumed to involve psychological and/or physical arousal to associated subject matter. However, the

definition of the material as objectionable implies that this arousal will be considered deviant in the wider social environment in which the consumer exists and therefore difficult to access outside of the media environment. Choice of the Internet as the medium through which such material is accessed results from expectations regarding the on-line availability of content that meets the consumer's needs without subjecting them to adverse consequences. In turn, these expectations and perceptions most commonly arise from previous experiences with the medium itself and/or as a result of information provided by a third party.

In line with the process described above, Quayle and Taylor (2001) outline the case of an individual who had been convicted of distributing child pornography. This individual reported being motivated to buy a computer specifically for the purpose of accessing child pornography. At the time of his arrest he was aged in his early 30s and said that he had been sexually attracted to pre-adolescent boys since his teens. However, he reported that he had never engaged in overt sexual activity with a boy. No evidence was provided to contradict this statement. Furthermore, the subject of Quayle and Taylor's case study indicated that he had never had a "successful" sexual relationship with another adult either. He stated that his knowledge regarding the presence and location of child pornography on the Internet was initially gained from press reports and newspaper articles.

The case described by Quayle and Taylor (2001) appears to fit with the adjustment model of Uses and Gratifications model identified by Blumler (1985). This model states that

individuals “accommodate to environmental constraints with the help of the media” (Blumler, 1985, p. 48). However, it is of note that Quayle and Taylor go on to explain how the offenders involvement in Internet Relay Chat community enabled him to openly discuss and explore his sexual fantasies involving children and to establish on-line sexual relationships that complimented these fantasies. The Internet medium provided the offender with the means, not only to adjust to but also to overcome the constraints of his off-line environment. It provided a new social environment and in doing so reshaped the nature of the needs that he was seeking to gratify through on-line involvement, and his expectations of the medium. Indeed, in this case the individual actually adopted the on-line persona of a child and was thereby able to explore his sexuality in a way that would not have been at all possible off-line.

The Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement does not account for changes in individuals media use resulting from social interactions occurring during the media experience. Indeed, this issue appears to have largely been ignored by media theorists. Therefore, it is suggested that other perspectives need to be considered to explain such behaviour. Given the illicit nature of media activity involving objectionable material, criminology is identified as a possible source of applicable theory.

Criminological Theories

In the field of criminology the way in which social relationships influence the behaviour of individual offenders has long been the focus of academic attention. Many of the theories that have resulted from this orientation are consistent with the Uses and Gratifications approach to media involvement in that they treat the social environment in

which crime occurs as giving birth to the criminal impulse. However, when they differ from the Uses and Gratifications model they do so in their acceptance that social influences do not cease once the impulse has been born. Furthermore, in contrast to paradigms of media involvement and behaviour, the social environment is not treated as separate from the behavioural experience that results from it. In the case of crime occurring during on-line activity, social associates formed as a result of this activity would be considered part of the individual's social environment, and potentially influential in terms of his or her on-going behaviour. In this way criminological theories appear better suited than the Uses and Gratifications model (as determined by Expectancy-Value theory) to explaining the behaviours that develop in response to social interactions occurring during Internet based involvement with objectionable material. The following section will outline the concepts and structure of criminological theories of Social Control. As will be shown, these theories are identified as particularly relevant to Internet involvement with objectionable material.

Social Control Theories

In 1969, Travis Hirschi formulated a theory of Social Control to account for differential levels of delinquency observed in youth populations. At the time, Hirschi contended that all criminal behaviour was human nature and that the real question to be answered was not why some people commit crime but why most do not. He concluded that as an individual develops they form bonds to other members of society and institutions within society. These bonds are identified as (1) attachment to others and respect for their opinion (social and familial ties and affection), (2) commitment to conventional lines of action (getting a good job, a good education and being successful), (3) involvement in

conventional activities (the more activities an individual is involved in the less time they will have to get into trouble), and (4) belief in conventional values (such as those relating to being a law abiding citizen). Social Control theory states that the formation of bonds to society facilitates the internalisation of societal norms and criminal activity is deterred by the threat that social attachments may be lost if societal norms are not adhered to. Delinquency is said to occur when an individuals bonds to society are weakened or broken by poor socialisation practices (Greenberg, 1999).

In terms of the use of the media to access objectionable material, application of Social Control theory suggests that such activity may be prevented if individuals develop strong social ties to society early in life. In some ways this is consistent with the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement in that non-media influences are said to constrain media use. However, the Uses and Gratifications model suggests that these constraints mediate media use from one moment to the next, while Social Control theory states that social ties exert a global influence on offending from the time they are formed. Although this conceptualisation denies evidence showing that involvement with objectionable material may appear as an individuals first criminal offence, often committed many years after the formation of social ties to society; Social Control theory is important because it forms the basis of other socially oriented criminological theories. In terms of the behaviour described above, perhaps the most relevant of these is Sampson and Laubs' theory of Age Graded Social Control (1993).

Theory of Age Graded Social Control

In contrast to the predictions made by classic Social Control theory, research has demonstrated that the level of involvement that individuals demonstrate in criminal offending and analogous behaviours often changes over time (Geis, 2000; Loeber and LeBlanc, 1990). Most children who demonstrate anti-social tendencies during childhood do not actually become antisocial adults (Gove, 1985). Similarly, many crimes are committed by adults who have no prior record of criminal offending, deviancy or analogous behaviours (Eggleston and Laub, 2002).

Sampson and Laub's theory of Age Graded Social Control (1993) attempts to account for changes in criminal involvement across an individual's life span. In line with classic Social Control theory, it posits social aspects of an individual's life as important in preventing criminal involvement. However, in contrast to Hirschi's conceptualisation of social ties, the Age Graded Theory of Social Control identifies informal pro-social relationships to others in society, rather than to society itself, as the source of prevention. Furthermore, the strength and nature of these relationships is said to change over time, often in relation to external factors in an individual's environment.

The concepts underpinning the Age Graded theory of Social Control are supported by research showing that individual changes in offence behaviour are frequently associated with changes in relationships to family, peers and professional colleagues. For instance, early offending and delinquency may decrease following establishment of a romantic relationship, marriage, beginning a new job, etc (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Sampson and Laub, 1990; Wright, Caspi, Moffit and Silva, 2001;). Indeed, the evidence suggests that

the development of informal pro-social social ties during adulthood may be as important in preventing crime and analogous behaviour as their development during childhood, if not more so (Andrews and Bonta, 1994; Sampson and Laub, 1993, 1990,).

Sampson and Laub (1993) suggest that pro-social relationships most likely to prevent criminal involvement are those that provide individuals with social capital and, in turn, demand social investment. The more a relationship is characterised by interdependence, and the more social and economic opportunities that participation in that relationship provides the individual, the greater its preventative value. In other words, the greater the sense of interdependence associated with a pro-social relationship, the more likely those involved will demonstrate behaviour that reflects mutually shared, pro-social values. As such, the theory of Age Graded Social Control specifies opportunities created through pro-social bonds, or the lack thereof, as a motivating force in the commission or non-commission of criminal acts.

Conversely, the weaker an individual's bonds to pro-social others, the fewer social and economic opportunities will be available to him or her, and the greater the likelihood that they will seek to satisfy personal goals through involvement in criminal activities and relationships. Sampson and Laub (1993) suggest that the absence of pro-social ties is sufficient to promote criminal (anti-social) behaviour. However, they contend that where such behaviour brings an individual in contact with others who reinforce (or provide them with means to enhance the outcomes of) their involvement in an anti-social activity, the individual will attempt to maintain these social connections by investing increased

time and energy into the anti-social activity. In turn, the theory of Age Graded Social Control infers that, just as adult social ties and relationships are important in controlling criminal behaviour, they can also be instrumental in promoting it.

Criminal Peers and Offending Behaviours

Criminological research has repeatedly shown that individuals involved in delinquent or criminal activities tend to associate with criminal or delinquent peers (Agnew, 1991; Elliot, Huizinga, and Ageton, 1985; Longshore and Turner, 1998; Sampson and Laub, 1990). As a result of these findings, theorists have argued that differential association is a significant factor contributing to differential outcomes in the likelihood that an individual will engage in criminal or deviant behaviour (Akers, 1985). Differential Association theories of crime and deviance emerged in the early part of the 20th Century in response to observations that some social groups demonstrated higher incidence of crime than others. These theories propose that in high crime communities' definitions of law as something to violate exceed definitions of law as something to be obeyed and that individuals residing in these communities are exposed to greater contact with criminal patterns and definitions than they were to law abiding definitions. Consequently, criminal behaviour is said to be learned through symbolic interaction with primary or intimate others that involves the presentation of criminal patterns, techniques, definitions and motivations as more desirable than behaviour conforming to legal norms (Sutherland, 1947, cited in Akers, 1985).

A range of criticisms have been aimed at theories of Differential Association, not least that they fail to explain the large number of individuals who are raised in 'high crime'

communities but do not go on to commit crimes themselves, or the number of individuals who do go on to commit crimes despite originating from 'law abiding' social and familial environments. Other commentators have highlighted the tautological nature of the concepts involved. For instance, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) general theory of crime, individuals demonstrating low self-control are more likely to establish criminal/delinquent networks because they are more likely to be involved in crime/delinquent behaviours. These networks provide individuals with increased opportunities to commit crimes (Longshore and Turner, 1998) and may actually be sought by those interested in such activity.

Despite these criticisms, the idea of differential association has remained an important criminological concept and has been influential in the development of subsequent criminological theory. According to Sampson and Laub's (1990, 1993) theory of Age Graded Social Control, differential association may be viewed as a mediating factor, influencing and influenced by other propensities to offend. Individuals who experience weakened social bonds, whether due to a particular characteristic such as low self-control, or to structural background factors such as parental criminality, family size, or mobility, are said to be more likely than others to seek out and foster attachment to delinquent peers and siblings (Sampson and Laub, 1993, p105). Given a lack of alternative social bonds, the attachment these individuals feel to delinquent peers and siblings may actually be stronger, and lead to a greater sense of interdependence, than the social attachments fostered by individuals who do not experience weakened social bonds.

Social Control and Social Influence

Sampson and Laub's (1993) analysis of the influence of social ties on preventing or promoting criminal behaviour suggests that, despite being described as anti-social, involvement in criminal behaviour may actually serve social purposes. Similarly, in a review of the characteristics of organisational offending Reed and Yeager (1996) highlight the importance of the social construction of interests that motivate specific incidents of law breaking by individuals who would otherwise not be defined as 'deviant' or 'delinquent'. Such acts include falsification of accounts, breaches of environmental and material standards, and non-compliance with statutory reporting requirements.

Reed and Yeager argue that within the context of large organisations, individuals are socialised to commit various illegal acts that contravene their own moral beliefs but that they are able to justify as being for the good of the whole organisation. This socialisation process occurs through interaction with others and the resultant transgressions are accepted as part of the organisational culture established by senior management and reinforced by roles and structures built into the networks, rewards and goal orientation of the business concerned. As such, individuals do not act out of self-interest, but out of an interest in serving the organisation that employs them and a belief in the validity of the operations that they have been trained and inducted into. Reed and Yeager suggest that such breaches of organisational law are supported by the fact that organisational law is often relatively ambiguous and that the relationship between the legally regulated and legal regulation in corporate settings is highly dynamic. Therefore, law breaking may become subjectively viewed less as an immoral activity and more as an ideological break

with convention in the 'pioneering' tradition that corporate entities hail as 'making a country great'.

The analysis provided by Reed and Yeager (1996) is important because it suggests that within organisational settings, opportunity to commit unlawful acts is socially constructed through the creation of relationships with other people. Reed and Yeager emphasise that it is the nature and value of these relationships that contribute towards motivations to take up these opportunities. As such, unlawful acts are viewed as resulting from affiliations between the individual and the culture that advocates the act. In Reed and Yeager's research, the individuals sampled appeared to identify with their role as part of a corporate entity such that this identity subsumed their perception of themselves as law abiding citizens. Rather than breaking social ties to society, such acts may actually create them. As law abiding citizens, the individuals sampled in Reed and Yeager's research may be prone to isolation, but as a corporate employee they will always be part of a 'team'. In line with this conceptualisation, Sampson and Laub (1993) provide research evidence showing that where weakened social ties to family and society are coupled with 'close' attachments to delinquent peers, the probability of becoming delinquent increases significantly. In contrast, simply having delinquent friends demonstrates no significant effect on the likelihood of delinquent behaviour.

Social Control and Internet Censorship Offending

Reed and Yeager's (1996) analysis of the social construction of institutional offending, together with Sampson and Laub's (1993) theory of Age Graded Social Control, highlights the potential for online relationships developed during the process of accessing

objectionable material to significantly influence subsequent offence behaviour. Assuming that ties to pro-social relationships must be somewhat weakened for individuals to become involved in accessing objectionable material; the more such activity facilitates new social relationships, the more likely additional time and energy will be invested in associated behaviour. Specifically, the more on-line social ties reinforce involvement with objectionable content, or enable access to additional objectionable content, the more those involved in them will experience a sense of interdependence. In turn, these individuals will be more likely to demonstrate behaviours that reflect mutually shared values regarding the content of objectionable material.

Integrating Criminological Theory and Media Perspectives

In terms of the behaviour of individuals involved in Internet based access to objectionable material, the results of research reviewed in the previous chapters suggest a number of social processes consistent with those described by the theory of Age Graded Social Control. The following hypothetical analysis uses these findings to conceptualise the way in which an individual's Internet involvement with objectionable material may develop over time. The analysis also uses the Uses and Gratifications model of media behaviour to define the likely relationship between an individual's social environment, personal needs, and choice of the Internet as a means for accessing objectionable material.

Internet Based Involvement with Objectionable Material: A Hypothetical

Assuming a paucity of opportunities for the expression or gratification of needs related to the content of objectionable material, the Uses and Gratifications model of media

involvement predicts that individuals who experience associated needs are likely to find Internet based access to such material particularly compelling. This may be especially true where gratification resulting from this access involves sexual release (Lyons, Anderson and Larson, 1994). The wide range of material available via the Internet, together with the potential for individuals to request material that precisely meets their needs, means that the likelihood of reinforcement occurring as a result of accessing such material is high. Similarly, the convenience of turning on a computer in the privacy of ones own home allows reinforcement to occur as frequently as possible, especially if the material is saved as a collection. Additional reinforcement may also occur as a result of the opportunity that easy, private access to the Internet provides individuals to escape stressful or frustrating social environments, especially those in which the predilection for the objectionable subject matter contributes to any negative emotional states experienced (Caplan, 2002; Quayle, Vaughan and Taylor, 2006). Furthermore, developing and maintaining a collection of preferred objectionable material provides a sense of ownership and control over the subject matter, a feeling that is likely to greatly alleviate associated stress and reinforce a sense of personal power (Quayle and Taylor, 2003).

In conjunction with the positive reinforcement received as a result of accessing objectionable material, habituation to that material might encourage individuals to spend increasing amounts of time searching the Internet for new sources of stimulation (Taylor, 1999). Information and skill obtained during this process enables the use of Internet applications facilitating on-line social interaction (Quayle and Taylor, 2003), while being able to offer objectionable material collected during other on-line activities enables entry

into the virtual community of others who share their interest (Taylor, 1999). Given the concealable marginalised nature of the interest, any positive feedback received from those with whom a collection is shared increases the likelihood of continued involvement with the on-line community (McKenna and Bargh, 1998). Such positive feedback may simply involve the desire to view objectionable material, as this desire may be taken to indicate that the material is valued (Nathanson, 1999).

As on-line activities increase, off-line social interaction decreases (Quayle and Taylor, 2003; Kraut et al, 1998) and social ties that could prevent or provide alternatives to involvement with the material are lost. In turn, the individual comes to rely more and more on Internet based associates, both for reinforcement of their original needs and for social interaction and support to replace lost off-line opportunities for such activity (Young, 1997). In line with the theory of Age Graded Social Control, as social investment in the Internet community is increased, attachment to on-line associates is strengthened (Samson and Laub, 1993). The ambiguous nature of the Internet environment together with strong attachment to on-line associates encourages behaviours that conform to the group norms of the on-line community in which an individual becomes involved (Bargh, McKenna and Fitzsimons, 2002). Given the development of dependency on the Internet medium and the focus of the on-line community, individual attitudes supporting the subject of the objectionable material may be adopted and/or enhanced (Miller and Reese, 1982, cited in Rubin, 2002).

As individuals are inducted into the virtual community culture of those who share their interest, associated activities are perceived as benefiting others and inhibitions regarding the acquisition and provision of new material are reduced (Reed and Yeager, 1996). Furthermore, the ambiguity of the virtual environment also contributes to 'blur' individual perceptions of the legal implications of on-line activities. The fact that the virtual community is perceived as existing only within the virtual dimension imbues it with a sense of the surreal and reduces comparisons between what occurs within its realms and what occurs outside (Quayle and Taylor, 2003). Recognition of the shared nature of their interest in the subject matter of objectionable material may undermine individuals sense of personal responsibility for personal actions related to that material (Reed and Yeagar, 1996). This recognition may also contribute to changes in attitude such that on-line associate's involvement with objectionable material is taken to indicate that an interest in this type of material is not 'unusual'. In turn, those involved may come to perceive the issue of their interest in the content of objectionable material as one of social justice in which the 'system' is seen to oppress what they perceive as a legitimate expression of individual human rights to personal expression (Reed and Yeager, 1996). .

Although this analysis does not explain why certain individuals are initially attracted to the content of objectionable material, research supporting criminological theories such as Hirschi and Gottfredson's (1990) general theory of crime suggest the possibility of a psychological predisposition (e.g. low self control), probably resulting from poor socialisation early in life. A review of the developmental literature reveals that criminal conduct is positively associated with the psychological constructs of 'anti-social

personality', 'psychopathic personality' and, in line with the claims made by Gottfredson and Hirschi, 'weak self control' (Andrews and Bonta, 1994). These correlates are conceptualised as "enduring behavioural, cognitive and affective predispositions" (Andrews and Bonta, 1994; pp 8) that are assumed to have developed early in life and demonstrate relative stability across the individual lifespan. Regardless of the reasons for initial attraction to objectionable material, however, the importance of the current analysis is the proposal that the likelihood of this predisposition being expressed, and the way in which it is expressed, may be influenced by expectations of the Internet medium and social and mechanical forces associated with Internet use.

Assumptions and Issues Affecting Integration of Media and Criminological Theories

Integration of the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement and criminological theory of Age Graded Social Control, as presented in the preceding hypothetical analysis, requires acceptance that social interactions occurring during the media experience may influence ongoing media experience. Criminological theories of social influence tend to assume a 'seamless' environment such that social associates compete directly with each other in terms of their ability to offer reinforcing relationships. In contrast, the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement suggests competition between media and interpersonal sources of social gratification, and in doing so it clearly distinguishes the former from the latter. This dichotomy appears to arise from the fact that, prior to the Internet, social gratification resulting from media experiences was largely incomparable to that arising from interpersonal experiences.

Prior to the introduction of the Internet, media tended to be used to achieve social gratification during social experiences (eg. discussion of media content with colleagues, watching a television show with a family member) but gratification did not occur via the medium itself. Where gratification was effected during media involvement (eg. through involvement in media talk back or imagined 'parasocial' relationships with media characters) it rarely involved the potential for the development of direct, mutually reinforcing and controlled communications with select individuals over extended periods of time.

Increased opportunities for media based social gratification brought about by the development of interactive Internet applications clearly suggests the potential for on-line involvement to result in the identification of additional social needs motivating media use. It would therefore appear timely to integrate this recognition into the Uses and Gratifications model. In doing so, however, a number of other differences between the concepts underpinning these theoretical perspectives are highlighted. Although social gratification may occur directly through the use of interactive Internet applications, unlike the continuity of social experience implied by criminological perspectives, Uses and Gratifications model argues that individuals must expect to receive social reinforcement in order to select these applications and engage in the experiences conducive to social influence. This argument is supported by research considering the functional differences between on and off-line behaviour (Flaherty, Pearce and Rubin, 1998).

Although criminological theories also argue that choice plays an important role in the likelihood that social influence will occur, the choices in question relate to relationships already in existence, and reinforcements that have already been identified, at the time these choices are made. For instance, from the perspective of these theories one can imagine how a group of unsupervised youngsters in the same neighbourhood, employees of a single corporation or unemployed individuals who meet at the same public bar, could come to identify potential benefits associated with social affiliation and in doing so develop behaviours conducive to maintaining these alliances. However, anyone who has used the Internet knows that it is possible to spend significant time on-line without entering a single chat room or engaging in any other activity likely to result in the formation of new associations. Indeed, the need to consciously choose these activities and to purposefully gain the skill and knowledge to engage in them is demonstrated in the case study presented at the outset of this chapter. Research by Demetriou and Silke (2004) and Taylor and Quayle (2006) suggests that the architecture of the Internet (specifically the anonymity and ease of use) may encourage some individuals to experiment with on-line opportunities, however, this pattern of use is by no means global. Indeed, discrimination in on-line behaviour of different individuals is implicitly demonstrated by the findings of research suggesting a significant association between the use of interactive applications and problematic Internet use by individuals who go on-line for sexual purposes (illicit or otherwise) (Cooper, Galbreath and Becker, 2004). This association has also been demonstrated for individuals who use the Internet for non-sexual purposes (Davis, Flett and Besser, 2002; Scherer, 1997; Young, 1997).

The Concept of Interpersonal Coherence

Despite the fact that only a minority of the individuals in studies into problematic Internet behaviours have been identified as involved in criminal activities, research considering the consistency between criminal and non-criminal behaviour may shed some light on the relationship between off-line activity and the selection of interactive applications during the commission of on-line offences. It has been argued that the only difference between criminal behaviour and non-criminal behaviour is the law (e.g. see Fattah, 1997). Although this argument has been the subject of some debate, international differences in the legal status and definition of objectionable material suggest that it may be of relevance to the current discussion, at least insofar as these differences tend to result from varying social and cultural definitions of moral and harmful behaviour. Many of the behaviours associated with problematic Internet use may be conceptually likened to behaviours that are typically associated with Western definitions of criminal activity. These include actively seeking out opportunities to engage in activities that society defines as unacceptable (such as adultery and promiscuity) and the betrayal and/or compromise of other relationships and/or responsibilities during involvement in these activities. In some cases, actions occurring during on-line involvement may even place individuals who are 'close' to the perpetrators in immediate danger or expose them to unnecessary risk.

Research undertaken within the context of criminal investigations has shown that the way in which individuals commit crimes is frequently related to the way in which they operate in other aspects of their day to day lives (Canter and Fritzon, 1998; Fritzon, Canter and

Wilton, 2001; Salfati and Canter, 1999; Santtila, Hakkanen, Canter and Elfgrén, 2003).

As stated by Canter (2000, pp. 42-43):

...the style of criminality is an integral, natural part of the criminal's general lifestyle, not some special, atypical aspect of it.

The concept of consistency between the criminal and non-criminal behaviour of individual offenders forms the basis of Canter's (1994) five-factor model of criminal offending. The first factor of this model relates to the concept of Interpersonal Coherence. Canter argues that crime is inherently a social activity involving an interpersonal transaction between those involved. At its most fundamental, the transaction occurs between the offender and the victim, although the social process of committing a crime may also include other offenders, individuals used to facilitate or enable the criminal activity, 'the law', or even bystanders. Of note is that the concept of interpersonal transaction does not necessarily require anyone else to be present at the time the crime is committed. Rather, the transaction is defined as interpersonal because it requires consideration of and responses to the behaviour of another. For instance, in the case of a burglary committed by a lone individual, the nature of the transaction may involve the offender taking advantage of the fact that s/he knows the owners of the premises are not around to protect their property. The act of 'taking advantage of someone' certainly implies social transaction but one does not need to be present to be taken advantage of.

Canter's concept of Interpersonal Coherence is described as the degree to which variations in interpersonal interactions engaged in during criminal activity correspond to variations in the interpersonal interactions of associated individuals during non-criminal activity (1994, 1995). Canter proposes that offenders will tend to deal with those with whom they interact during the commission of a crime (in particular their victims) in a manner similar to how they deal with other people in their day-to-day lives. The concept of Interpersonal Coherence also implies that individual offenders will gravitate towards committing crimes that involve social transactions with which they have some familiarity or relationship. This relationship may concern the specific nature of the transaction (eg. individuals who have been victims of abuse perpetrating further abuse, business people engaging in fraudulent activities during business transactions) or the specific type of people involved in the transaction (individuals with strong pro-life attitudes committing crimes against doctors who facilitate abortion).

Applying the concept of Interpersonal Coherence to the study of Internet behaviour, it is suggested that individuals most familiar with reinforcement resulting from involvement in off-line relationships will be most likely to seek such involvement during on-line activities. This conclusion appears to be confirmed by the finding that individuals who are most likely to demonstrate problematic Internet behaviours are not only highly likely to make use of socially facilitative Internet applications, but also highly likely to be married or in committed off-line relationships (Cooper, Scherer, Boies, and Gordon, 1999; Schneider, 2000b).

Interpersonal Coherence and Narrative Theory

Canter's conclusions regarding Interpersonal Coherence are grounded in a Narrative Theory of personality (Canter, 1994). Narrative Theory emerged in response to the need to integrate or 'strike a balance between' the fixed focus of trait theories²⁷ and the mutable focus of social learning theories²⁸ and behaviourist models²⁹ (McAdams, 1995, 1996). It proposes that personality is neither uni-dimensional nor fixed³⁰ but rather, as suggested by McAdams (1994, 1995, 1996), comprised of at least three distinct levels, including: dispositional traits, personal concerns (including motives and strategies), and self-concept or 'narrative identity'.

In line with the developmental findings underpinning traits theories of criminal behaviour (e.g. see Andrews and Bonta, 1994), Narrative Theory acknowledges that personal traits tend to remain stable over the life course. However, their influence on an individual's strategies, motives and self-concept is perceived to be minimal and these other aspects of personality are subject to change (Maruna, 2000). Indeed, McAdams (1994) describes dispositional traits in terms of the most superficial aspects of personality. They are the salient behavioural styles that one would identify when first introduced to someone. For instance, upon meeting someone for the very first time one might immediately perceive that person as being introverted or 'shy', but, forming the conclusion that someone is shy does not prevent one from wondering what that person is 'really like'.

²⁷ Such as the concept of self-control espoused in Hirschi and Gottfredson's (1990) general theory of crime

²⁸ Such as Social Control theories

²⁹ Such as Expectancy-Value theory

³⁰ Although, as will be discussed later, it is important to remember that consistency in behavioural responses and the concept of a fixed personality should not be confused.

A Narrative view of the level of personality concerning motives and strategies relates to what people want from life and how they plan to get it (McAdams, 1995). Motives and strategies are said to be implicitly tied to attitudes and group norms, which are in turn tied to social and developmental context (Maruna, 2000). Referring to the example provided above, some shy people want to travel, some don't. Some want to travel when they are in their 20's but by the time they reach 30 they have gotten married and decided that they want to own a house instead. What sort of house do they want? How will they pay for it? Maybe their father is a builder and will help them to renovate an old villa; maybe they are a trained professional with a good income and will pay for their dream home to be built. Many of these questions may be answered by an understanding of McAdams third level of personality; that pertaining to self concept.

Self-concept, or narrative identity, is essentially the way in which an individual 'makes sense of' and maintains a sense of control over his or her life. It is a self-story that integrates past, present and future, goals, motivations and feelings into a coherent whole (McAdams, 1995, 1996). As an individual's own private account of what they have done and why they have done it, a self concept includes reference to people and places, traits and motives, opportunities, dispositions, values, and beliefs, but is not necessarily the direct product of these. Having such a story allows individuals to 'refer to the manual' and thus facilitates decision making in complex environments. For instance, if an individual defines their self concept in terms of strict religious values and relationships with others who share similar values then decisions regarding such issues as abortion or

premarital sexual involvement may be easier to make. However, the 'manual' itself is said to be in a constant state of flux and continues to evolve with the experiences of the individual who is creating it. McAdams (1994) stresses that the self-concept or narrative identity is a fluid construct and subject to change, particularly when individuals experience particularly salient emotional experiences that do not appear to fit the existing story. In such cases, the 'author' can either change the story or distort the information to fit it. For instance, someone who considers him or herself a 'good', law-abiding citizen may resort to stealing if he or she has no other way to provide for his or her family. In this event the individual may decide that he or she is not really a 'good citizen' after all, or that being a good citizen requires one to look after his or her family first and therefore the action was acceptable.

While the description of the evolving nature of self-concept may appear at odds with Canter's (1995) more stable concept of Interpersonal Coherence it is consistent with social psychological theories such as 'cognitive dissonance', 'self-perception attribution' and the criminological concept of 'routine activities'. Together with these theories, Narrative Theory states that any change needs to 'make sense' (to be 'internally consistent') to the person involved (Maruna, 2000). It is to be expected that when faced with decisions regarding the integration of information into their self-concepts individuals will refer to previous experience of the outcomes of such decisions, as well as personal goals and motives. As a result of this process, it is more likely that information that does not fit their existing self-stories will be changed than the self-stories themselves. Indeed, even if the life story is changed to reflect a new self-understanding, it will occur

in a way that accommodates that which has gone before. Epstein and Erskine (1983, cited in Maruna, 2000, p307) liken such processes of “personal identity change” to the way in which past information may be reorganised and viewed in a new light as a result of a paradigm shift in scientific understanding.

Narrative Theory, Criminological Theory and Media Theory

Given its mutable, multidimensional nature, Narrative Theory may be viewed as a means of integrating existing theoretical perspectives and the research supporting them, into a framework that allows for a more comprehensive understanding of human behaviour than each of these theoretical perspectives provide on their own. In terms of the current thesis, Narrative Theory incorporates many of the main tenants of the criminological and media theories identified as important in understanding the way in which individuals engage with objectionable material via the Internet and the potential impact of social influence on this process.

In terms of the criminological theories reviewed in the current chapter, the concept of Social Control appears to be embodied in Narrative Theory’s proposal that individuals limit their behavioural choices depending on their socially tied narrative identity. In contrast to the mechanisms of externally defined social control suggested by classic Social Control theory, however, Narrative Theory assumes that the social environment controls individual action by influencing self-perception. Unlike classic Social Control theory, limitations on behavioural choices are perceived to be subject to change as an individual gains additional experiences and these experiences are integrated into this identity. Given this emphasis on life span development of narrative identity, Narrative

Theory (and by default, the concept of Interpersonal Coherence) shares many commonalities with Sampson and Laubs theory of Age Graded Social Control. Indeed, in line with the Age Graded Theory of Social Control, Narrative Theory states that changes in an individual's social environment will precipitate choices regarding new relationships and, in turn, new sources of social control and social influence.

Narrative Theory also fits well with the models and theories of media use discussed in Chapter One of this thesis. Specifically, Narrative Theory's emphasis on interpreting behaviour through an individuals pre-existing perceptions, knowledge of self and the social environment in which he or she exists is consistent with the Expectancy-Value theory that underpins the Uses and Gratifications orientation. In line with Narrative Theory, Expectancy-Value Theory suggests that individuals engage with media because they expect that it will provide them with something that they identify as being of value in terms of their self-concept, as defined by their social context and previous experiences of reinforcement within that context. Similarly, like Narrative Theory, the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement acknowledges the importance of understanding behaviour (specifically media behaviours) in terms of individual motives.

Narrative Theory and the Integration of Criminological Theory and Media Theory

In addition to consistencies between the concepts underpinning Narrative Theory and those underpinning the media and criminological theories reviewed in this thesis, the concept of narrative identity described in Narrative theory also provides a means for overcoming some of the differences between these theories. This concept may be useful

in facilitating the integration of media and criminological theories in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the impact of social influence on criminal behaviour occurring within a media environment. Narrative theory acknowledges that while the social environment provided through the Internet may be functionally different from the social environment that exists outside of the Internet; an individual's narrative identity remains stable across both environments. As such, his or her choices regarding whether or not to engage in social interaction in either of these environments will be mediated by the same psychological mechanisms. These mechanisms are determined by past experiences, such that, individuals who have previously benefited from social interaction in a familiar environment (e.g. off-line) will be more likely to seek out social interaction in an unfamiliar environment (e.g. during initial use of the Internet).

In support of this conclusion, McCown, Fischer, Page and Homant (2001) provide research showing that individuals who maintain healthy off-line relationships and/or demonstrate off-line social skills are more likely to develop close on-line relationships. Similarly, research comparing face-to-face and on-line interaction has demonstrated trait based consistency between on and off-line interaction such that on-line interaction is perceived to complement that which occurs off-line (Flaherty, Pearce and Rubin, 1998; Kraut et al, 1998; Peris Peris, Gimeno, Pinazo, Ortet, Carrero, Sanchez and Ibanez, 2002). For instance, Peris et al (2002) found that individuals who used Internet chat rooms are more sociable and less neurotic than Internet users who do not.

Narrative theory acknowledges the need (as described by the Uses and Gratifications model of media behaviour) to choose to make use of specific Internet applications to facilitate Internet based social interaction, and provides a means to predict the likelihood that individuals will do so. Once this prediction has been made, the criminological theory of Age Graded Social Control may be applied to predict the impact of on-line social influence on the media based criminal behaviour of the resulting subset of individuals.

Summary: Pulling it all together

In Chapter One the Uses and Gratifications model of media consumption was identified as a theoretical framework that could be used to gain insight into the issue of how some people come to use the media to access legally objectionable material, why they go on using it for this purpose, and what their usage of legally objectionable material says about them. In Chapter Two, the issue of accessing such material via the Internet was discussed, together with possible gratifications that those who engage in this type of activity receive as a result of their involvement. This discussion highlighted the importance of social interaction occurring during the Internet experience as a possible motive for ongoing involvement in the Internet based trade of objectionable material and the development of associated activities and/or interests. While the Uses and Gratifications model acknowledges social needs and constraints as a mediating factor in individual media choice, it does not allow for the influence of social processes occurring during the media experience.

In order to address the issue of on-line social influence, Chapter Three discussed the way in which the concepts underpinning the criminological theories of Age Graded Theory of

Social Control may be integrated into a Uses and Gratifications framework. Although promising, it was recognised that in order to proceed with any such integration process, it is necessary to view the Internet environment as a social environment continuous with, as opposed to distinct from, other social environments that influence media use. Given the functional differences between on and off-line social opportunities and engagement processes, however, acceptance of this view was identified as conceptually problematic. Specifically, it was emphasised that while off-line interaction may result from individuals being inadvertently brought together by shared circumstances, in the Internet environment individuals must consciously choose to make use of specialized technological applications to actively seek each other out and that, despite benefits associated with doing so, many users do not appear motivated to make this decision.

In order to explain differences between individuals who consciously choose to make use of socially interactive Internet applications and those who do not, the concept of Interpersonal Coherence was discussed. Developed from Narrative Theory, this concept suggests that the social transactions that an individual engages in during the commission of a crime will reflect those with which he or she is most familiar, and which have provided him or her with the greatest reinforcement in non-criminal situations. This concept is supported by research examining social transactions during the commission of violent and sexual offences.

Narrative Theory is identified as particularly useful in understanding the behaviour of individuals who use the Internet to access objectionable material because it provides a

multidimensional analysis of human behaviour and personality, integrating concepts common to the other theories considered as part of this thesis. Although it has been noted that “criminal behaviour is a multidimensional phenomena that requires multiple tools if we are to understand it” (Giddens, 1976, cited in Maruna, 2000, pp 304); the fact that this thesis considers not only criminal but also media related behaviour has required the integration of a very broad range of concepts and constructs. These span the disciplines of media studies, criminology, and psychology. While theorists (eg. Hirschi, 1989) have commented that given the often conflicting assumptions of individual [criminological] theories, attempts to meaningfully integrate the ideas espoused by them may be a futile exercise, the theories themselves often overlap by virtue of their shared histories. Grounded in Expectancy-Value Theory and Hull’s Drive Reduction Hypothesis, the Uses and Gratifications model of media use is implicitly related to psychological theories of motivation. Criminology has traditionally been multi-disciplinary in its focus with much of what is currently accepted as criminological wisdom deriving from the fields of personality, developmental psychology, social learning, and behaviourist models. Social psychology has also borrowed much from research undertaken within sociological or criminological framework, and vice versa.

In line with the main tenants of Narrative Theory, the current analysis has attempted much less to combine theories than to treat them as explanations of distinct steps within a lifelong process of human development and behavioural patterns, including patterns of media use. Figure 1 provides an overview of how the theories identified in this and the

preceding chapters have been related to each other to develop a framework for predicting behaviours associated with the use of the Internet to consume objectionable material.

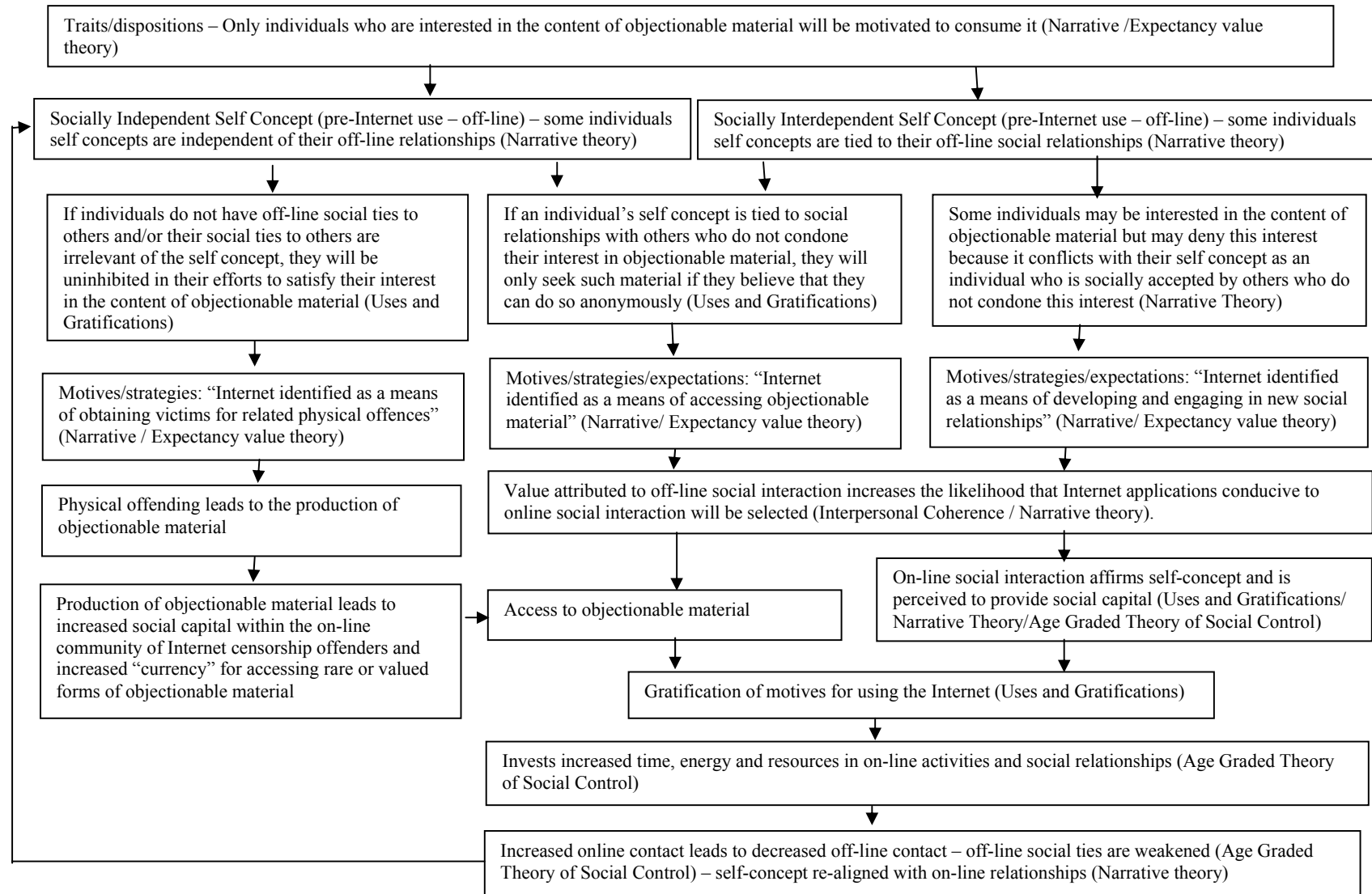


Figure 1: Overview of the theoretical framework developed to explain the processes involved in the development of Internet censorship offending

As indicated in Figure 1, the likelihood that an individual will use the Internet to access and/or distribute legally objectionable material is mediated by the value that they place on the content of such material (as determined by traits and/or dispositions), the degree to which their self-concept (as described in Narrative Theory) allows for the expression of associated interests, and their expectations of the Internet environment (as outlined in Expectancy-Value Theory). In line with the Uses and Gratifications model of media use, Figure 1 highlights the importance of personally significant social constraints on reducing the likelihood of access to objectionable material through other means and the likelihood that on-line activities will involve the distribution of such material.

For individuals who are constrained by their off-line ties, expectations that the Internet will provide an anonymous source of such material are likely to be particularly important motivator in terms of its uptake for this purpose (Uses and Gratifications Model of Media Behaviour). In the case of some individuals who are interested in the content of objectionable material, but whose self-concept is socially bound to the values of off-line associates, however, even this expectation may be insufficient to motivate on-line behaviours directed towards accessing objectionable material. Rather, in line with their self concept as socially motivated individuals, they may form expectations regarding the utility of the Internet medium as a means of developing and engaging in new social relationships. If these relationships are sufficiently gratifying, however, they may contribute to the weakening of off-line social ties (Age Graded Theory of Social Control). Given a predisposition towards demonstrating an interest in the content of objectionable material, on-line experiences of the anonymous nature of Internet based interactions and associated incentives

towards open communication may result in individuals who made use of socially facilitative Internet applications coming to associate with others who share this interest. In turn, individuals who previously avoided the social and personal implications of demonstrating an interest in objectionable material may re-evaluate their self concept. Any dissonance that they experienced between their interest in such material and their self concept as a socially accepted individual may be overcome by reorienting their social identity to align with on-line associates (Narrative Theory). Consequently, they may come to invest increased time, energy and resources in their on-line relationships and the pursuit of objectionable material to maintain their connection to these relationships (Age Graded Theory of Social Control).

Where To From Here? Narrative Theory, Internet Access to Objectionable Material, and Behaviour

The research and theory reviewed in the current and preceding chapters suggests that social influence occurring during on-line interaction whilst accessing legally objectionable material may contribute to the development of increasingly problematic offence and offence related activities. In turn, through consideration of the role of an individuals self concept (including his or her involvement in social relationships) in relation to his or her media use, Narrative Theory (as described in relation to the concept of Interpersonal Coherence) may allow researchers to make predictions about the possibility of this influence occurring. Clearly, in terms of media use that involves illegal activity, the potential importance of being able to determine the likelihood of future involvement and associated activities is significant. In order to assess the potential for such use, however, it is first necessary to establish the validity of the relationship between on-line social influence and increased involvement in associated

offence behaviours and to assess the degree to which activity occurring on-line conforms to off-line activity (ie. the behavioural consistency of the processes involved). In line with these goals, the current thesis will attempt to test the following hypotheses:

- (i) *that offenders who engage in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material will demonstrate a greater degree of involvement in offence and offence related behaviours than offenders who do not engage in on-line interaction, and*
- (ii) *that choice of applications facilitating on-line social interaction (eg. IRC, ICQ and Email) is related to increased opportunities for social interaction in the off-line environment in which the offender lives and works.*

The following chapter will discuss the data that will be used to test these hypotheses and the analytical methods that will be applied to this end.

Chapter 4: Method

In order to explore the relationship between the on and off-line social interaction and level of involvement in Internet censorship offending and associated activities; the current research will involve the re-analysis³¹ of data collected during the investigation of individuals identified by the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs Censorship Compliance Unit (CCU) as accessing, trading or distributing objectionable material via the Internet. This chapter will discuss the involvement of the CCU in the data collection process and the development of a data collection tool to facilitate this process. It will then provide details of the sample obtained through the use of this tool and the techniques used to analyse the sample data.

The New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs Censorship Compliance Unit

The New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs Censorship Compliance Unit (CCU) is responsible for enforcing the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 and the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Amendment Act 2005. As outlined in Chapter Two, under the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 it is an offence to produce, possess or trade in ‘objectionable’ publications (including electronic publications) obtained from or distributed via the Internet. Objectionable material, as defined in Section 3 of

³¹ Initial consideration of this dataset, during the author’s employment at the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, was limited to the provision of descriptive statistics, similar to those provided in Appendix F. The current research involves directed, in-depth, analysis of these data for the purpose of testing the hypotheses presented in the preceding chapter.

the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 (Appendix B), embodies that which:

...describes, depicts, expresses or otherwise deals with matters such as sex, horror, crime, cruelty, or violence in such a manner that the availability of the publication is likely to be injurious to the public good.

This includes the publication of material that promotes or supports, or tends to promote or support:

- The exploitation of children, or young persons, or both, for sexual purposes
- The use of violence or coercion to compel any person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct
- Sexual conduct with or upon the body of a dead person
- Other sexual or physical conduct of a degrading or dehumanising or demeaning nature including the use of urine or excrement in association with degrading or dehumanising conduct or sexual conduct
- Bestiality
- Acts of torture or the infliction of extreme violence or extreme cruelty
- Criminal acts or acts of terrorism
- The representation (whether directly or by implication) of members of any particular class of the public as inherently inferior to other members of the public by reason of any characteristic of members of that class, being a characteristic that

is a prohibited ground of discrimination specified in Section 21(1) of the Human Rights Act 1993...

Since July 1996, the CCU has taken a proactive role in prosecuting individuals who access, trade or distribute objectionable material by way of the Internet. This role involves investigating local Internet websites and newsgroups, and monitoring Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channels. As part of the monitoring process, CCU investigators actively engage with others in on-line chat rooms. As a result of this strategy, they are able to observe the acquisition, distribution and trade of objectionable material as it happens. Furthermore, the anonymity of the Internet environment means that their identities as law enforcement investigators remain hidden from others and it is not unusual for investigators to be invited by those with whom they interact on-line to access or trade objectionable material.

Once sufficient evidence has been collected to warrant further investigation in relation to an Internet censorship offence, the CCU investigators trace the ISP address of the computer used to commit the offence. Formal investigation begins with the process of identifying who had access to the ISP address at the time the offences were committed. After this has been established, the suspect is interviewed and his or her premises (including his or her computer hard-drive, electronic storage devices and Internet log) are searched for additional evidence of the offence.

In many respects the nature and function of New Zealand's CCU is unique. Because the CCU is the only agency in New Zealand responsible for enforcing the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 and because enforcement of the

Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 is the only responsibility of the CCU, it is well placed to develop specialist expertise regarding the nature of these offences. Furthermore, unlike nations and states in which law regarding censorship offences is enforced by (or within) general law enforcement agencies (such as the Police), the specific focus of the CCU reduces the danger that such offences will be given a lower priority in relation to other crimes that are perceived to be 'more serious'. Similarly, because New Zealand is a relatively small, island state, it is not subject to the jurisdictional difficulties associated with larger nations or federal administrative arrangements. At the time the research was undertaken, the entire CCU team comprised less than 10 staff operating under a single tiered administrative structure; the size and simplicity of which reduced the potential for individual cases of censorship offending to 'fall between the cracks' or 'get lost in the system'. This operational environment means that statistics regarding the number and type of censorship offences investigated in New Zealand are likely to be more representative of such offending than those collected in other jurisdictions.

Development of the Data Collection Tool

In early 2000 the manager of the New Zealand CCU approached the Department of Internal Affairs Research Unit (in which the author of this thesis was then employed) to develop a tool for profiling censorship offenders. He was particularly interested in distinguishing between the behaviours and activities of individual offenders and the implications that such distinction had in terms of judicial policy and sentencing options. CCU investigators also identified patterns of offender behaviour and lifestyle factors that they believed were indicative of an increased risk of re-offence or offending in other areas. They suggested that being able to target resources towards

such cases, and provide evidence in support of their judgements, would enhance the effectiveness of their activities and increase recognition of the need for collaboration with other law enforcement and justice agencies. In response to these requirements, it was suggested that the CCU embark in a longitudinal research process involving the collection of data regarding the lifestyles, behaviours and activities of individual offenders. It was proposed that in the short term these data could be used to monitor general trends in offence behaviour and offender demographics. Over the longer term it could be analysed for consistency in the behaviour, lifestyles and activities of repeat offenders.

Given the long-term vision of the data collection initiative, together with the ethical issues associated with such an undertaking, it was conceded that only information that could easily be obtained by investigators during the investigative process should be included. However, it was also recognised that the amount of information that was routinely made available to investigators during the investigative process far exceeded the amount that they recorded as part of their duties. Therefore, it was decided that the development of a tool for systematically recording information obtained during the investigative process was needed. This tool was envisaged as a checklist/comment sheet, designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Before developing the checklist, however, work needed to be undertaken to determine the type of data that would most benefit the goals of the CCU.

Development of the Data Parameters

As noted by Canter (1994) marked differences exist between the type of data that are of interest to law enforcement investigators and that which is of interest to social

science researchers. While the primary purpose of the CCU data collection initiative was to provide data that could be used to improve CCU business activities, it was recognised that social scientific theory and practice had much to offer this process. Specifically, the CCU manager acknowledged the increased ‘credibility’ that working within a social scientific paradigm would afford the results of the initiative, and the potential benefits that this would provide in terms of negotiating with other agencies (such as the police and justice government departments).

In order to ensure that the data collected by the CCU investigators conformed to both law enforcement and social scientific expectations, identification of the specific items to be included in the checklist involved a joint process of professional consultation and academic literature analysis. Professionals working in the fields of criminology, clinical psychology, justice administration, censorship regulation, law, and ‘the prevention of the international trade in children for sexual purposes’ were invited to provide suggestions and feedback at various stages of the checklist development process. In addition, a review of the literature concerning the Internet based trade of objectionable material was undertaken to identify potentially important items for inclusion on the checklist. Reference to this literature is included in the preceding chapters (eg. Hartman, Burgess and Lanning, 1985; Lanning, 1992; Taylor, 1999). However, of most significance in terms of ensuring both the validity and the effective use of the data collection checklist was input provided by the CCU investigators themselves.

Selection of the full list of items for inclusion in the CCU data collection checklist was undertaken in collaboration with the CCU investigators, with several items

determined on the basis of their knowledge of the investigations that they had already been involved in. Where checklist items were generated as a result of other information and relevant literature, discussion regarding the importance of their application was ongoing. In all cases, inclusion of a checklist item involved considering it in the light of known cases to check consistent interpretation of its meaning. Where appropriate, all possible responses were identified and included in tick lists. This strategy was intended to reduce the effort required by CCU investigators to complete the checklist and reduce the likelihood that specific cases or details would be omitted.

The wording of individual checklist items was also dictated by the way in which CCU investigators interpreted the concepts to which they related. Therefore, some wording included jargon or colloquialisms. Use of jargon and colloquialisms was accepted in recognition that it was the investigators who would be using the checklist and it should be presented in a way that was easily accessible to them. However, in all cases the concept identified by each item was explained during the checklist development process and operationalised for future reference³². In some cases the range of variables associated with a specific checklist item, or the ongoing development of the technology under consideration, were perceived to render operational definitions potentially fallible. Where these items were still judged to be important by CCU investigators, they were encouraged to develop their own operational definitions of the concepts involved as they referred to them. To facilitate this process, the pilot checklist items required them to describe the information they used in responding to these items (eg. socio-economic status, residential maintenance, computer literacy).

³² In most cases, operational definitions of the items were included on the checklist itself.

Appendix C provides the original checklist developed for use by CCU investigators. The completed checklist was divided into nine sections (described as ‘parts’ to avoid confusion with the various ‘Sections’ of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993). These parts pertained to:

1. Offender demographics
2. Offender lifestyle and isolation factors
3. Details of offence related behaviour and offender detection
4. Details regarding the nature and legal classification of objectionable images and material associated with the offence
5. Additional information about the ‘uniqueness’ of objectionable images and material associated with the offence
6. Details about any images and material found in the possession of offenders that could not be classified as legally objectionable but were considered ‘suspicious’ within the context of the offence related behaviour³³
7. Information about each offender’s criminal history, occupation, associates and access to children and other potential subjects of objectionable images.
8. Information about offender’s computer use and skills
9. Details regarding the apprehension and prosecution of offenders and the related outcomes of each individual case

³³ Collins (2005) describes such material as ‘indicative’. He states that indicative material is often found in the possession of individuals involved in the collection of child pornography and although it “may not directly associate and individual to an offence, [it] provides authorities with information and insight into the sexual preferences, interests and hobbies of the collector” (p. 2). According to Collins, this material is referred to as ‘collateral material’ in by United States Law enforcement officers.

Questions relating to the nature of the objectionable material (Part 4) were organised according to the category identified in Section 3.2 and 3.3 of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 to which the material pertained.

Strategies for Reducing Biases in the Data Collection Process

During the process of developing the checklist it was recognised that, due to the nature of their work and their personal circumstances, the CCU investigators might be biased in their responses to specific types of offenders. Such biases were perceived to place them at risk of paying more attention to certain offence types than others, or emphasising the significance of certain behaviours, activities and lifestyle factors over others. Although it is impossible to completely eliminate biases of this nature, the data collection checklist was designed to account and compensate for some of them. Specifically, the checklist items focused on identifying whether offenders demonstrated particular behaviours or conformed to particular social identities; however, no attempt was made to quantify the incidence of behaviours or the level of social conformity. As such, the checklist emphasised general differences and similarities between offenders but did not measure these in degrees. By limiting responses to 'yes or no questions' the scope for response discrepancies based on individual differences in qualitative interpretation was reduced.

Given the evidence based decision-making requirements of the criminal justice system in which they operate, the investigators were aware that any data that they collected during the investigation process needed to be defensible in a court of law. This consideration was emphasised by inclusion of a number of checklist items pertaining to concepts that are clearly defined by the Films, Videos, and Publications

Classification Act 1993 or consistently requested during prosecution proceedings (eg. cost of computer equipment, applications and software employed during the commission of the offence, nature of the objectionable material, details of detection, size of offenders collections of objectionable material, way in which material was organised). The legal requirements of the investigative process were also used to reduce inconsistencies in the definition of objectionable material associated with individual offending.

When New Zealand CCU investigators decide to investigate a case of alleged censorship offending they are required to gain agreement from the New Zealand Office of Film and Literature that the material can indeed be classified under an appropriate Section of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993. As part of this process, the investigator needs to make clear that the material cannot be interpreted in any way other than in terms of the Section under which he or she is seeking the warrant to investigate. This is achieved through visual comparison on the basis of legal definitions of objectionable material and through consideration of supporting contextual evidence, such as notes, stories or classification systems physically or electronically associated with this material. For instance, when estimating the age of individuals portrayed in objectionable material, the New Zealand Office of Film and Literature prescribes the absence of muscle tone, pubic hair, physical and sexual development as visual indicators of childhood.

According to the New Zealand Office of Film and Literature, censorship offending is determined on the basis of the way in which material is likely to be perceived, regardless of the validity of that perception. Therefore, material that looks like it

involves sex with or upon the body of a dead person is coded under Section 3.2(c) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 even if it can not be established that the subject of the material was clinically deceased. Supporting evidence for such classifications may include written descriptions accompanying the material (eg. “Janes funeral”) and visual evidence of ‘instruments’ and ‘props’ commonly associated with death (eg. caskets, graves, stab wounds, blue skin tones). Similarly, in the case of incest classification, such evidence may include written descriptions of relationships (eg. “father and son at play”) and serial images conveying stories consistent with incest (eg. father making breakfast, father picking son up from school, father joining son in bed, father performing sexual act on son).

Obviously, some classifications are extremely difficult to prove and where ambiguity is identified, no classification is made. During the process of developing the CCU checklist, CCU investigators stated that this is particularly likely in the case of material portraying sexual activity with individuals who can not clearly be identified as minors³⁴. Therefore, although a checklist item for sexual activity involving a ‘teenager’ (aged up to 16 years old) was included, they emphasised that unless an offender was also collecting other types of objectionable material (such as material portraying sexually immature children engaged in sexual activity) it would be unlikely to be used.

The combination of legal mores, together with the fact that much of the information that was entered into the checklists was obtained from records that had already been admitted into evidence, ensured that all data that were not clearly identified as opinion

³⁴ Cooper, Giardino, Vieth and Kellogg (2005) suggest that due to the difficulty identifying the age of post-adolescent children portrayed in sexualised images, the number of young teenagers portrayed in such images may be grossly underestimated.

had been systematically verified or subjected to a formal system of peer assessment prior to analysis. For instance, where information pertaining to prior convictions or legal outcomes was required, court and police records reviewed during the investigation and judicial proceedings were referred to.

Limitations and Advantages of the Data collection Process

Although influenced by the requirements of the CCU, the decision to have CCU investigators collect information about censorship offenders and censorship offence behaviours during the course of their investigative duties posed a number of issues in terms of accepted social science research practice. Of particular concern was the scope for error and misinterpretation of information arising from the fact that the investigators rather than the offenders provided the data. However, in light of existing research using significantly less structured law enforcement data as the basis for analysis (see Salfati and Canter, 1999; Canter, Hughes, and Kirby, 1998; Canter and Heritage, 1990), and identification of data analysis methods that account for the limitations inherent in such data (eg. Smallest Space Analysis – discussed later), it was decided that these limitations were justifiable.

Because of the second hand nature of the data, use of the data collection checklist precludes collection of information about what attracts individuals to the Internet based trade of objectionable material, or how social forces operate to support or enhance that involvement. However, as indicated by Becker (1994), Looman (1995) and Smallbone and Wortley (2004) even if offenders are given the opportunity to provide input into the research process, the resulting data may still be subject to problems of recall and demand characteristics influencing the way that they interpret

their activities. By employing investigators to provide information about offenders, the scope for motivational inference is greatly reduced and the data are refined to that which is immediately visible and measurable. Furthermore, given the nature of their employment, investigators are likely to be aware of a wider range of offence activities than individual offenders. Therefore, they are also more likely to be able to identify distinctions between them and similarities across them³⁵.

Indeed, in many ways the fact that the checklists were completed by investigators rather than offenders may be viewed as imbuing the research with a level of objectivity and consistency that would not otherwise have been possible. Of particular note is that the CCU investigators had access to information about a much larger sample of censorship offenders than would have been obtainable had the data been directly collected by social scientists. The ethical limitations imposed on many academic research efforts mean that most offenders who are studied from within this context have already been convicted of the crimes that form the focus of the research initiative. Furthermore, these individuals know that they are being ‘studied’ and this knowledge is likely to significantly influence the type of information they provide. That is not to say that being the subject of a legal investigation does not significantly affect the content of an individuals communication. However, the fact that investigation occurs within the context of the individuals ‘life’ prior to conviction as opposed to research occurring within or by way of an institutional setting post conviction, means that the investigator is less reliant on the offender’s

³⁵ At the time the data were collected, all of the investigators had been working in the area for at least a year. It may therefore be assumed that their familiarity with the subject matter provided them with the knowledge needed to notice subtle differences between images, circumstances and attitudes.

communication, memory and interpretation of their offence activities and social environment than the social science researcher.

Although not strictly naturalistic in nature, given the context of the CCU data collection process, it was anticipated that lack of explicit research intervention together with the fact that many of the individuals identified in the current research had not yet been formally convicted, would yield data that better demonstrated the scope of the general offender population under consideration than data collected post conviction. Indeed, in addition to formal conviction, offenders were identified as having been warned, diverted from the justice system, or as having absconded or died prior to prosecution. Several others were still in the prosecution process at the time the analyses were undertaken. However, all of those identified in this research were identified as having traded, possessed or distributed material classified as illegal under the Films, Videos, and Publication Classification Act (1993), and therefore offending against the Act. Therefore, the use of the term '*offender*' is justified as a means of identifying these individuals.

Piloting the Data Collection Tool

The CCU data collection checklist was piloted during the three months ending 31st December 2000. Directly following the development of the checklist, CCU investigators were asked to begin the data collection process by entering the details of current cases. They then proceeded to employ the checklist to record data from previous cases. These data were acquired from existing records, information obtained since the investigation, and notes taken by the investigators at the time of the offence investigation. No specific criteria were used to select previous offenders for the pilot

study. However, investigators were encouraged to start with the most recent cases and to focus on examples in which investigation had resulted in ongoing involvement of the CCU(e.g. investigations that generated detailed evidence supporting criminal justice intervention for offences under the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act, 1993). Of note is the dynamic nature of the data collection process. CCU investigators completed new checklists as they investigated new cases. In accordance with the process of investigation, information often took a significant period of time to accumulate, especially that pertaining to prosecution activities and legal outcomes. This process meant that parts of the checklist were frequently left incomplete. In addition, CCU investigators were required to complete checklists for past investigations during investigative down time, of which there was little. In some cases, the manager of the CCU allocated leave from CCU investigators normal responsibilities in order to facilitate the completion of checklists³⁶.

A total of 121 cases of censorship compliance offending were profiled using the pilot CCU checklist. These cases involved 118 individual offenders, three of whom were profiled twice using the pilot checklist. These multiple profiles resulted from the fact that offenders had been investigated in relation to more than one offence on more than one occasion. Of the 118 offenders sampled using the pilot checklist, 113 had been involved in Internet related offences and five had been investigated with regards to objectionable material in the form of video recordings (with two of these also found to be in possession of objectionable photographs, magazines, and letters/stories).

³⁶ As such, one of the most significant outcomes of the development of the data collection process may well have been the effective collaboration of the research and investigative personnel.

In discussion with the CCU investigators, analysis of the results of the first 35 checklists completed as part of the pilot process highlighted a number of issues associated with the implementation of the checklist. In response to these issues, certain modifications were made to the way in which the checklist was structured and the wording of individual items. In addition, some questions were discarded. Appendix D provides details of these changes and the rationale for making them. Appendix E provides the modified checklist. For those items that were not discarded, the main differences between the pilot checklist and the modified checklist relate to format. In cases of changed wording of items, all involved the addition of information. These additions were aimed at enhancing the distinction between items and interpretation of data.

In order to ensure comparability of data collected using the pilot checklist with data collected using the modified checklist, where changes in wording in the modified checklist led to the creation of new items, qualitative comments were used to recode data collected using the pilot checklist. In the event that qualitative comments did not provide sufficient information for recoding, CCU officers were asked to provide additional information to assist with updating the data collected using the pilot checklist. This process was necessary to meet the longitudinal demands of the CCU data collection process, especially given that some of the CCU investigators continued to use the pilot checklist even after the modified checklist had been developed.

Reliability

In order to test the reliability of the CCU investigators' use of the data collection checklist, a sample of 20 case files was randomly selected and the material contained

within these files³⁷ was used to re-rate Part 4 of the checklist (Nature of Objectionable Images and Material). During this process, case files were identified on the basis of offender names as opposed to the numbers used by the research officer during the analysis process. Thus, at the time of re-rating, the research officer was blind to the ratings given by the CCU investigators. Upon examination of the ratings given by the CCU investigators it was found that one of the selected cases could not be used to test inter-rater reliability because the CCU officer who had originally submitted it had not provided sufficient details for comparison. The ratings given by the CCU investigators and the research officer for the remaining 19 cases were each subjected to reliability analysis using Chronbach's Alpha as the measure of similarity. This analysis yielded an mean Alpha correlation of 0.800774 (range = 0.5056 to 1, median = 0.8282) suggesting a relatively high level of inter-rater reliability.

Further examination of the individual cases revealed that for the six comparisons in which the Chronbach's Alpha correlation coefficient fell below 0.75, differences between the research officer's ratings and the CCU investigators ratings were most often due to the research officer categorising the objectionable material according to more sections of the Act than the CCU investigators. It is concluded that the CCU investigators were more conservative in their ratings than the research officer. This finding reflects the fact that the investigators tended to focus on those sections of the Act under which they believed they could definitely obtain a conviction. Upon removal of the ratings pertaining to the sections of the Act that were not identified by the CCU investigators, comparison between the ratings of the research officer and

³⁷ Of note is that where large amounts of objectionable material were found in the possession of offenders, only a sample of it was included in the contents of the case files.

those of the CCU investigators revealed an average (mean) Alpha correlation of 0.849121 (range = 0.6830 to 1, median = 0.8619).

The Current Research

The current investigation involves a new and far more detailed analysis of the data provided using both the pilot and modified checklists. This analysis is intended to explore the relationship between the level of involvement in offence related activities demonstrated by Internet censorship offenders and the on and off-line social interactivity associated with these activities. To this end, it will draw on the theoretical paradigm developed in Chapter three of this thesis and test the hypotheses (i) that offenders who engage in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material will demonstrate a greater degree of involvement in offence and offence related behaviours than offenders who do not engage in on-line interaction, and (ii) that choice of applications facilitating on-line social interaction (eg. IRC, ICQ and Email) is related to increased opportunities for social interaction in the off-line environment in which the offender lives and works³⁸.

The Sample

Between the 1st of October 2000 and the 31st of December 2002, CCU investigators completed 157 checklists pertaining to the investigation of 153 individuals for censorship compliance offences. The difference between the number of checklists and the number of offenders arose from the fact that three individuals were investigated for more than one Internet censorship offence on more than one occasion, with one of

³⁸ In contrast to this focus, all previous consideration of the dataset has been limited to the provision of descriptive statistics pertaining to a subgroup (N=103) of the entire sample described here.

these having been investigated for a total of three offences across three different years (Table 2)³⁹.

Table 2: Dates of investigations for repeat Internet censorship offenders

<i>Identification number</i>	<i>Date of first investigation</i>	<i>Date of second investigation</i>	<i>Date of third investigation</i>
Offender 1	4/5/98	15/11/99	NA
Offender 106	13/10/98	1/3/01	NA
Offender 1038 ⁴⁰	10/6/97	4/9/98	26/9/01

Of the 157 checklists completed, 121 were provided using the pilot checklist and 36 were provided using the modified checklist. As stated earlier, in order to ensure comparability between the pilot and modified checklists, data collected using the pilot checklist was recoded into the modified checklists with the assistance of the CCU investigators.

Of the investigations for which checklists were completed, eight concerned offences for which no evidence of Internet involvement could be identified. For the purpose of the analyses undertaken as part of this thesis, the data generated during these investigations were excluded. Consequently, the current analyses will sample 149 checklists profiling the Internet censorship offences of 145 individuals investigated by the CCU between October 2000 and December 2002. However, unless otherwise stated, most analyses will only include data from the most recent offence committed by each of these 145 individuals.

³⁹ In addition, the data revealed that a further five offenders had been convicted of an offence involving objectionable material at least once prior to the offence for which the checklist was completed, and two others had been investigated but not convicted. However, no data were available regarding these earlier offences.

⁴⁰ Offender numbering varied according to the year of detection and the instrument used to record offence behaviour.

As identified in Table 3, the vast majority of the sampled offenders were identified as accessing and/or distributing in relation to images pertaining to Section 3.2(a)⁴¹ of the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act (1993). Excluding the four individuals for whom no details of the objectionable material accessed or distributed was provided, only five offenders were not identified as collecting and/or distributing material of this nature and of these, only one was identified as offending under more than one Section of the Act. This offender was identified in possession of material prosecutable under Sections 3.2(b)⁴², 3.2(c)⁴³, 3.2(d)⁴⁴ and 3.2(f)⁴⁵. Three other offenders were only found to be collecting and/or distributing material identified under Section 3.2(e)⁴⁶ and another was only found to be collecting and/or distributing material identified under Section 3.2(c)⁴⁷.

⁴¹ The exploitation of children, or young persons, or both, for sexual purposes

⁴² The use of violence or coercion to compel any person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct

⁴³ Sexual conduct with or upon the body of a dead person

⁴⁴ Other sexual or physical conduct of a degrading or dehumanising or demeaning nature including the use of urine or excrement in association with degrading or dehumanising conduct or sexual conduct

⁴⁵ Acts of torture or the infliction of extreme violence or extreme cruelty

⁴⁶ Bestiality

⁴⁷ Given that the hypotheses being tested in the current research concern the influence of on and off-line social interaction on Internet censorship offence behaviour and ‘associated activities’, and that none of the ‘associated activities’ under consideration pertain to a specific type of objectionable material (see later in this chapter), it was not considered necessary to distinguish between offenders on the basis of the type of objectionable material that they selected. Furthermore, given that many of the offenders who selected images classified under Section 3.2 (a) of the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act (1993) also selected images classified under other Sections of the Act, making such distinctions would have greatly reduced the size and utility of the sample under consideration.

Table 3: Section of the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act (1993) under which images found in the possession of individual offenders were classified

<i>Section of the New Zealand Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act (1993)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Section 3.2(a): The exploitation of children, or young persons, or both, for sexual purposes	136	93.78
Section 3.2(b): The use of violence or coercion to compel any person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct	24	16.55
Section 3.2(c): Sexual conduct with or upon the body of a dead person	2	1.38
Section 3.2(d): Other sexual or physical conduct of a degrading or dehumanising or demeaning nature including the use of urine or excrement in association with degrading or dehumanising conduct or sexual conduct	36	24.83
Section 3.2(e): Bestiality	42	28.97
Section 3.2(f): Acts of torture or the infliction of extreme violence or extreme cruelty	17	11.72
Section 3.3(c): Degrades or dehumanises or demeans any person	3	2.07
Unknown	4	2.76

Table 4 provides details of all of the investigations documented using the CCU checklist by the year in which the warrant for investigation/first interview occurred. Also included in Table 4 are details of the total number of censorship offences investigated in each year between 2000/2001 and 2002/2003. No records of total investigations were able to be obtained for the years prior to 2000/2001, however, details of the total number of censorship based prosecutions and convictions recorded from 1996/1997 until 2002/2003 are included. In order to provide a means of comparison, Table 4 also shows the number of cases recorded using the checklists that resulted in prosecution.

Table 4: Offences recorded by the CCU between 1996 and 2003

<i>Year of Investigation</i>	<i>Total Investigations</i>	<i>Total prosecutions</i>	<i>Convictions</i>	<i>Checklists completed (Date of warrant)</i>	<i>Checklists for offences resulting in Prosecution</i>	<i>Prosecutions involving Internet</i>	<i>Checklists completed for Internet offences (Date of warrant)</i>	<i>Checklists for Internet offences involving prosecution</i>	<i>Checklists as a proportion of total Internet prosecutions</i>
1995-96				2	2				
1996-97		27	27	25	18	14	22	14	100.00
1997-98		26	26	24	15	25	24	14	56.00
1998-99		25	25	31	20	24	31	20	83.33
1999-00		34	34	24	17	31	24	17	54.84
2000-01	439	30	30	20	16	21	18	14	66.67
2001-02	716	27	27	21	16	18	21	16	88.89
2002-03	360	26	25	4	4	24	4	4	16.66
No warrant/ Date not specified	-	-	-	6	3	-	5	3	-
TOTAL		195	194	157	111	157	149	102	65.61

As shown in Table 4, the CCU investigators completed checklists for 65.61 percent of the cases that were prosecuted by the CCU following investigation between June 1996 and July 2003. However, it is of note that in the case of the current analysis, the data collection process ceased early in the 2002/2003 year. Limiting the comparison to prosecution data preceding this period, the percentage of prosecutions identified in the sample increases to 73.68 percent.

In terms of the total sample of all of the cases considered in the current analysis, 15.44 percent of those that did not proceed to prosecution resulted in a warning being given, 3.36 percent resulted in a referral and one (0.67 percent) resulted in both a warning

and referral (Table 5). Of the six referrals given, four were made to the youth aid section of the New Zealand police, one to the New Zealand Department of Children and Young Persons, and one was to the New Zealand police diversion scheme.

In addition, 5.37 percent of cases were identified as being subject to an ‘other type of outcome’. Of the eight individuals involved in these cases, three were reported to have committed suicide prior to prosecution, three were reported to have absconded to another country, one to have absconded within New Zealand, and one was sentenced to a term in prison for a previous censorship offence shortly after the investigation began. As this offender had ‘electronically hidden’ the objectionable material that he had collected during the second offence, making it particularly difficult for the CCU investigators to collect evidence against him, the CCU decided to cease the investigation process following his sentence for the earlier offence.

Finally, in 10 cases (6.71 percent) no details were provided with regards to the outcome of the investigations involved.

Table 5: Outcomes of investigations recorded using the CCU Checklist for Internet Censorship Offenders

<i>Year</i>	<i>Checklists for Internet offences involving prosecution</i>	<i>Checklists for Internet offences involving referral</i>	<i>Checklists for Internet offences involving warning</i>	<i>Checklists for Internet offences involving warning and referral</i>	<i>Checklists for Internet offences involving other outcome</i>	<i>No details provided re outcome of investigation</i>	<i>Checklists completed for Internet offences (Date of warrant)</i>
1996-97	14	2	1	0	2	3	22
1997-98	14	1	4	0	3	2	24
1998-99	20	0	7	1	3	0	31
1999-00	17	0	3	0	0	4	24
2000-01	14	1	3	0	0	0	18
2001-02	16	1	4	0	0	0	21
2002-03	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
No warrant/ Date not specified	3	0	1	0	0	1	5
TOTAL	102	5	23	1	8	10	149

Due to the lack of comparable data regarding the Internet censorship investigations for which checklists were not completed, it is impossible to assess whether the checklist sample is representative of all of the cases investigated by the CCU. However, given that those cases identified as occurring prior to the 2000/2001 year were completed retrospectively and that no specific criteria were given with regards to their selection, it is likely that the CCU investigators chose cases for documentation on the basis of salient aspects of the investigation. It is also likely that if reporting biases exist they would be most evident amongst this sample. In order to test for differences between the data recorded retrospectively and that recorded during the course of investigations, the age, regional location, section of the Films, Videos, and

Publications Classification Act, 1993 under which the offences were committed, and legal outcomes of Internet based cases investigated before July 2000 were compared with those of cases investigated from July 2000.

Comparison of the checklists completed for investigations undertaken prior to July 2000 against those completed for investigations undertaken from July 2000 onwards revealed no significant differences between the ages or regional locations of the offenders involved. It did, however, reveal a slight difference⁴⁸ between the sections of the Films, Videos, and Publications Act 1993 under which offenders were investigated. Specifically, those identified before July 2000 were more likely to have been identified as offending under Section 3.2(b)⁴⁹. This finding suggests that investigators may have been selective in terms of the cases that they recalled, paying particular attention to material portraying the sexual abuse of adults. Alternatively, it may suggest changes in the type of material being made available and accessed via the Internet over time. Certainly, this conclusion is supported by the findings of Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) and Barron and Kimmel (2000)⁵⁰. Whatever the reason, as the current analysis does not specifically focus on the Sections of the Act under which individual cases of offending were investigated, this difference was accepted as noteworthy, but not concerning enough to render the sample invalid. Furthermore, no significant differences were noted between the outcomes of cases identified before July 2000 and those identified from July 2000 onwards. Despite this lack of significance, however, it is conspicuous that all of the individuals identified as having absconded or having committed suicide prior to prosecution were identified before July 2000. This finding may indicate selectivity in the memories of the

⁴⁸ χ^2 with yates continuity correction (N=137, 1) =5.091, p=0.024

⁴⁹ The use of violence or coercion to compel any person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct

⁵⁰ See chapter two for more details regarding this conclusion

investigators completing the checklists. Alternatively, it may suggest that since these early experiences the investigators have become better able to manage and prevent such risks.

Although no differences were identified between the locations of cases investigated pre July 2000 and from July 2000 onwards, an interesting by-product of the analysis process was identification of regional differences between the locations of offenders generally. Despite the South Island of New Zealand only being served by one CCU investigator at the time of the data collection process (in comparison to the two investigators located in each of the other areas), this region recorded a disproportionately high number of offences. In turn, the Upper North Island region recorded a disproportionately low number of offences (Table 6). Given that the South Island is the least densely populated area of New Zealand, with the Upper North Island being the most densely populated, this finding appears noteworthy in terms of the social dynamics involved in offence behaviours.

Table 6: Regional differences in the detection of Internet censorship offences

<i>CCU Regions</i>	<i>Population (%)</i>	<i>Proportion of sample investigations (%)</i>
Upper North Island	51.9	42.4
Lower North Island	23.8	25
South Island	24.3	32.6

As shown in Table 7, offences were disproportionately highly recorded in ‘secondary urban areas’⁵¹ and disproportionately lowly recorded in ‘main urban areas’⁵² and ‘rural areas’⁵³ of New Zealand.

⁵¹ χ^2 (N=145, 1) =43.70, p=0.001

⁵² χ^2 (N=145, 1) =5.26, p=0.05

⁵³ χ^2 (N=145, 1) =4.75, p=0.05

Table 7: Differences in the detection of Internet censorship offences by population density

<i>New Zealand Census Geographic areas</i>	<i>Population (%)</i>	<i>Offences (%)</i>
Main Urban Areas	71.03701	62.06897
Secondary Urban Areas	6.306356	20
Minor Urban Areas	8.376098	10.34483
Rural Areas	14.25476	7.586207

Other issues identified as salient in terms of the demographic details of the Internet censorship offenders sampled were the over-representation of male offenders⁵⁴ and (as shown in Figure 2) the large proportion of offenders aged less than 20 years old⁵⁵. Although the over-representation of males as perpetrators of criminal offences may render their over-representation in the current sample un-surprising, the identification of large numbers of young people as Internet censorship offenders was perceived to warrant further examination. It was suggested that these individuals may focus their activities on ‘age appropriate material’ and that this might affect the validity of the data. However, further analysis showed that these young offenders were no more likely than other offenders to select images portraying teenaged children, and no less likely than other offenders to select images of very young children, or images portraying adult rape, extreme cruelty and torture, sexual activities involving urination and defecation, and/or bestiality. They were, however, significantly more likely to select images of child pornography involving bestiality⁵⁶.

⁵⁴ N=144, 99 percent

⁵⁵ N=39, 27 percent

⁵⁶ Fishers exact test, $p=0.019$; 4 of the 5 offenders who selected images portraying sexual interaction between children and animals were aged less than 20 years old.

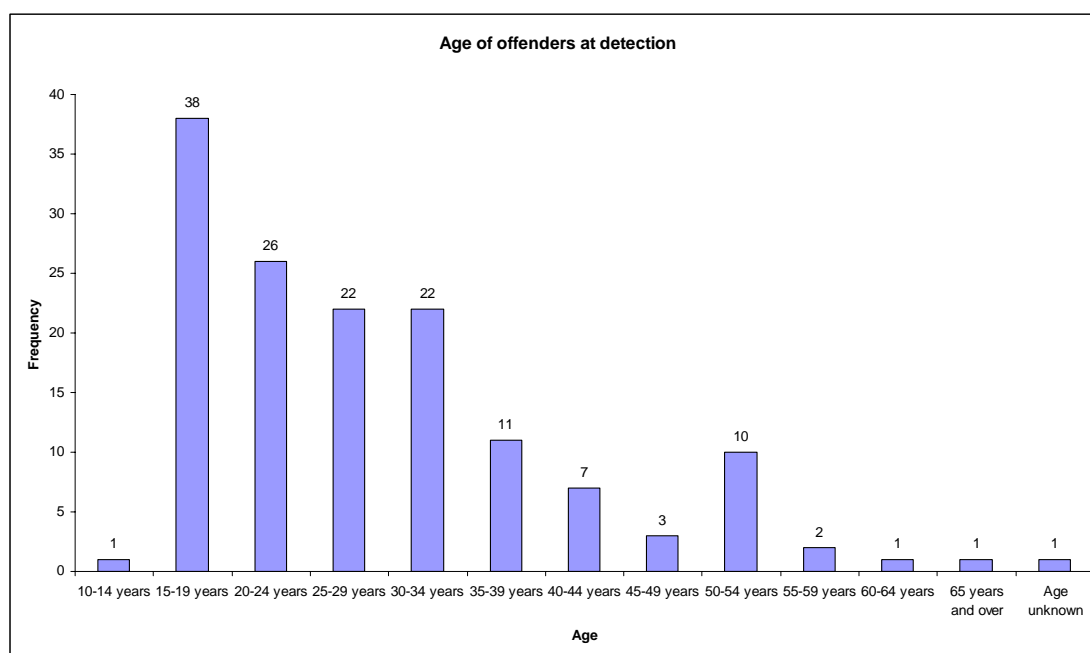


Figure 2: Age groupings of the Internet censorship offenders sampled using the Censorship Compliance checklist

A detailed description of the social and behavioural characteristics of the 149 Internet censorship offenders sampled using the CCU checklist is provided in Appendix F. These statistics form the basis of the analyses undertaken and presented throughout the following chapters of this thesis.

Analysis Framework

In order to facilitate analyses aimed at testing the hypotheses presented in Chapter three, CCU investigators responses to items listed on the CCU checklist for Internet censorship offenders were reviewed to assess their potential applicability as variables of relevance to the hypotheses proposed. Although this strategy may seem contrary to traditional research practice, in which data collection is typically directed by and therefore occurs subsequent to the development of associated hypotheses, it is supported by the work of other researchers, such as Canter and Heritage (1990), Canter, Hughes and Kirby (1998), Fritzson, Canter and Wilton (2001), and Salfati and Canter (1999). These researchers' analysed police files for content that reflected

specific criminal actions and offender characteristics and this content was subsequently subjected to analysis to test pre-determined hypotheses. It is argued that through the use of this method, these researchers were able to gain access to a significantly richer data source than through traditional methods of hypothesis driven data collection. Moreover, in the current study, the law enforcement based data source is enhanced through standardisation of the data recording process.

Selection of Variables

In the current study, the content analysis process focused on identifying variables that indicated:

- levels of offender involvement in offence and offence related behaviours,
- involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material, and
- opportunities for social interaction in the off-line environments in which offenders lived and worked

Only a subgroup of the items contained in the CCU checklist for Internet Censorship Offenders were found to have resulted in responses relevant to these constructs⁵⁷. Decisions regarding the degree to which specific responses could be used to indicate variations in these constructs were informed by the findings of the research reviewed in the preceding chapters of this thesis. Responses to CCU checklist items were identified as indicating high levels of offender involvement in offence and offence

⁵⁷ Descriptive statistics of the responses given to these checklist items, together with contextualising demographic details for the entire sample of offenders is provided in Appendix F. In a number of cases, CCU investigators provided comments elaborating the information provided in the checklist. For instance, in relation to the production of objectionable material, investigator comments included reference to whether actual individuals had been used or abused during the production of the material. Comments such as these were considered important in both the selection and analysis of the data collected and are also documented in Appendix F.

related behaviour if they demonstrated that the offender invested significant time, energy or resources in associated activities, took risks in relation to offence behaviour and/or demonstrated persistence, tenacity or skill in their offence related behaviour. As such, heightened involvement in offence and related behaviours was conceptualised as involvement that extended beyond that required to simply commit the offence. This type of involvement may also be conceptualised in terms of offenders demonstrating few '*constraints*' on their offence and offence related behaviour (or relatively '*unconstrained*' offence behaviour). Responses identified as indicating such involvement included reference to offenders:

- possessing a large number (> 979) of objectionable images (upper quartile range)
- being involved in generating new objectionable material
- being involved in developing websites or selling objectionable material
- organising their collections of objectionable material
- possessing multiple forms of objectionable material
- possessing material that could not be classified objectionable but was considered suspicious within the context of offending
- regularly engaging with children or other subjects similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material that they select in a manner that is contextually or thematically related to the focus of said material
- demonstrating high computer literacy
- being on-line for more than 30 hours during the week prior to investigation
- using multiple applications to access objectionable material on-line
- storing objectionable material in an easily movable form
- possessing a computer that has a resale value of more than \$3000.00

- having previous convictions for other offences

Responses suggesting that the offender invested only the bare minimum of time, energy or resource allocation needed to commit the offence were identified as indicating low levels of offender involvement in offence and offence related behaviour. This type of involvement may be conceptualised in terms of offenders demonstrating significant '*constraints*' on their offence and offence related behaviour.

Relevant responses included investigator reference to offenders:

- possessing a small number (< 48) of objectionable images (lower quartile range)
- demonstrating low computer literacy
- spending less than 10 hours online during the week prior to investigation
- storing objectionable material to their Hard Drive only
- possessing a computer that has a low resale value (\$0-999)
- only using one Internet application during offence related activities

Tables 57 and 58 in Appendix G provide further justification for the use of the items listed above as indicators of high (unconstrained) and low (constrained) involvement in offence activities. These Tables also include reference to the questions in the Modified CCU Checklist that generated each indicator item.

Checklist items describing offenders' use, during the process of accessing objectionable material, of Internet applications that are conducive to on-line social interaction were identified as indicative of involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material. In addition, investigators

comments regarding offenders' on-line interactions with other censorship offenders were also identified as indicative of this type of involvement. Offenders who demonstrated such involvement were conceptualised as demonstrating increased '*social connectivity*' in the on-line environment. Responses identified as indicating increased offender social connectivity during the process of accessing objectionable material included investigator reference to offenders:

- using IRC, ICQ, Direct client to client chat/DCC, and/or Email to access objectionable material (responses to question 49 of the modified checklist)
- associating with known censorship offenders (responses to question 39 of the modified checklist)

In terms of the off-line environment of the sample of Internet censorship offenders, responses describing offender involvement in home or work relationships conducive to social interaction were identified as indicating increased opportunities for off-line social interaction (increased off-line social connectivity). These responses included investigator reference to offenders:

- sharing a household with other adults (responses to question 12 of the modified checklist)
- working in a team/studying with others (responses to question 44 of the modified checklist)

In turn, responses describing isolated home or work environments were identified as indicating reduced opportunities for this off-line social interaction (reduced off-line social connectivity). These responses included investigator reference to offenders:

- living alone (responses to question 12 of the modified checklist)

- not working and not participating in an education/training course (responses to question 44 of the modified checklist)
- working and/or studying alone (responses to question 44 of the modified checklist)

Analysis of the Data

The CCU checklist was not specifically designed to collect data regarding the constructs (e.g. of offender involvement in offence and offence related behaviours and level of on and off-line social interaction) underpinning the proposed hypotheses. Rather, these constructs were used to guide reorganisation of data collected by way of the checklist to produce operational variables that could be used to test for associations between them. In turn, each variable was conceptualised as indicating the existence of conditions and behaviours that would most likely support the existence of the constructs themselves.

Given the deductive means by which the variables were identified, the wide range of variables and associated behaviours said to contribute to the definition of each construct, and the exploratory nature of the research, the potential for erroneous conclusions regarding the relationships between constructs was high, especially if drawn from associations between isolated variables. Therefore, the data analysis process emphasised consideration of multiple variables pertaining to each construct, such that only the cumulative sum of associations justified discussion in terms of the hypotheses proposed. In other words, the more variables identified as indicative of one construct (eg. high levels of involvement in offence and offence related activities) that were found to be associated with variables identified as indicative of another

construct (eg. high levels of on-line interaction) the greater the value of the associations in terms of supporting or refuting any hypothesised relationship between the two constructs.

Although imperative to the integrity of the results and any conclusions drawn from them, given the nominal nature of most of the data under consideration the need to test for multiple associations between multiple variables indicative of each construct posed a number of statistical and logistical difficulties. In order to overcome the difficulties inherent in the data, before testing for direct associations between variables a series of Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) procedures were employed as a means of identifying any obvious structure in the dataset.

Smallest Space Analysis is a non-metric Multi-dimensional Scaling technique used to represent correlations between variables in a statistically derived geometric space (See Boston, 1997). The current research used Jaccards correlation coefficient to generate a number of correlation matrices, each of which related to a subset of the variables identified as indicative of the grid and group characteristics of the dataset. The SSA procedure was then used to show the results of these analyses visually, on a two dimensional space, by plotting points representing each variable rank ordered according to the level of statistical association between it and all other variables portrayed as points on the plot. The spatial proximity between points plotted using SSA may be viewed as indicative of structural similarities and dissimilarities between variables.

For instance, if most offenders who were found to organise their collections of objectionable material were also found to generate objectionable material and to use ICQ to access objectionable material, the points representing each of these variables would in all likelihood be plotted close together in one region of the plot. If, at the same time, most offenders who were found in possession of more than 979 objectionable images were also found to spend more than 30 hours of the preceding week on-line and to use Email to access objectionable material, the points representing each of these variables would in all likelihood be plotted close together in another region of the plot. In turn, if none of the offenders who were found to possess high cost computer equipment were noted to collect non-objectionable material pertaining to the content of the objectionable material in their possession, but half of those who demonstrated high computer literacy did, the points representing offenders possessing high cost computer equipment and offenders collecting non-objectionable material would polarise away from each other with the point representing the offenders demonstrating high computer literacy most likely located mid way between them.

SSA is particularly useful in exploratory analyses as it produces a solution of smallest dimensionality on the basis of the rank order of correlations rather than their absolute values. As such, it relates variables on the basis of levels of association rather than degrees of association and the results demonstrate increased resilience to “variations in the raw correlations between the objects being analysed” (Boston, 1997; p. 12). As stated by Boston (1997; p. 12), this increased level of resiliency “is especially pertinent in cases where the data are taken from a real-world context and is open to contamination by a variety of confounding variables”. Indeed, SSA techniques have

been previously applied to data obtained from police records and were chosen for the current analyses on the basis of the similarity of such data to the data analysed here (see Canter and Heritage, 1990; Canter, Hughes, & Kirby, 1998; Salfati and Canter, 1999). Their use in this context allows the representation of non-metric relationships between relatively large numbers of variables across minimal dimensions, and compares these in a visually accessible manner. Furthermore, while other techniques, such as cluster analysis, may be equally applicable to this type of data, the spatial structure associated with Multi-dimensional scaling methods such as Smallest Space Analysis has been shown to fit the data better when the underlying structure of that dataset is unknown (as would be expected in exploratory analyses) (Everitt and Rabe-Hesketh, 1997). Indeed, Smallest Space Analysis was specifically developed as a relatively unrestricted way to identify structure in previously unexplored datasets for the purpose of formulating hypotheses. In contrast to techniques such as factor analysis, it does not require that the underlying data are distributed as multivariate normal or that the relationships between the variables under consideration are linear. Neither is it vulnerable to “over-fitting” of data when the case to variable ratio is low (although it is generally advised that the variable to case ratio should be greater than 1:1)⁵⁸.

In terms of the analysis of dichotomous crime data, in which each variable under consideration is identified as either present or not present in relation to a specific offence, the Jaccards Correlation Coefficient (used in the current Smallest Space Analyses) is particularly useful because it does not test for ‘joint non-occurrence’ of variables. If two variables are both absent in a dataset, their concurrent lack of

⁵⁸ Personal communication Dr Samantha Lundrigan 2001.

representation does not result in an increased association between them. Given that data collected using the CCU checklist were often limited to the ‘observable’, the lack of measurement of a particular variable in a particular case cannot be taken to mean that the variable was not present. Rather, it simply means that it was not observed. For instance, in the cases of those Internet censorship offenders who deleted their collections of objectionable material prior to investigation lack of evidence regarding the collection of images portraying children does not mean that selection of images portraying children was not part of the offence behaviour.

Given the nature of the associations presented using SSA, and the impact that these associations have on the distribution of all other points presented on the SSA plot, it is important that all variables subjected to analysis are mutually independent⁵⁹ of each other. It is also important to ensure that sufficient variation exists between variables to facilitate distinction between them on the SSA plot and that that each variable applies to sufficient cases to ensure that the associations represented are amenable to interpretation. While proponents of SSA do not provide clear guidelines regarding the “cut-off” points for determining whether a variable shows sufficient variation and/or interpretive potential for inclusion in the analytical process, comparable research examining the behaviours of homicide offenders has included variables identified in as few as 9 cases (10 percent) and variables included in as many as 90 percent of cases (Salfati and Canter, 1999). Given that all of the variables identified as being of interest in the current investigation were observed in more than 9 cases, none were excluded on the basis of their rarity. However, in light of the fact that some of the analyses accompanying the SSA results would need to exclude up to 35 cases on the

⁵⁹ No variable precludes the existence of another variable.

basis of missing data, it was determined that only variables found in less than 100 cases would be included. Most notably, this decision resulted in the exclusion of data pertaining to the use of IRC as a socially interactive Internet application.

In some cases, the behaviours described on the CCU checklist and identified as relevant to the current analyses were grouped together as a single variable to increase the reliability of associations between them and other variables subjected to SSA analysis. For instance, the variable pertaining to ‘convictions in relation to a physical offence included both sexual (N=12) and non-sexual (n=8) offence types. Although sexual offences would appear most relevant to the content of the objectionable material under consideration, not all such material was sexually oriented. Furthermore, as described by Smallbone and Wortley (2004), research evidence suggests clear associations between offenders being convicted of sexual offences and being convicted for non-sexual offences. Similarly, Canter and Kirby (1995) found that almost half of a sample of child sexual offenders had been previously convicted for other offences including dishonesty, theft, burglary and violence. The research undertaken by Smallbone and Wortley (2004) indicates that many sexual offenders who enter the criminal justice system are opportunistic in their commission of crime. In turn, Canter and Kirby (1995) suggest that in many cases, offences against children may simply represent one aspect of a broader lifestyle of criminal behaviour. Given other research demonstrating that sexual offenders are generally only convicted of a small number of the crimes they commit (Langevin et al, 2004), inclusion of non-sexual physical offences alongside sexual physical offences was considered justified as an indicator of a general propensity to offend physically.

A Coefficient of Alienation (C of A) accompanies each Smallest Space Analysis plot. The Coefficient of Alienation indicates the fit between the geometric representation portrayed in the SSA plot and the original correlation matrix from which the associations between the points on the plot are derived. A Coefficient of Alienation can range from zero to one, with zero representing a perfect fit and coefficients of less than 0.20 indicating a good fit (Boston, 1997). Given the method of association used in SSA procedures, however, the relationship between points on an SSA plot may be deceiving. For instance, if all of the individuals identified as having been convicted of a physical offence are identified as possessing more than 979 images, and all of those identified as producing objectionable material are identified as possessing more than 979 images, the points pertaining to individuals having been convicted of a physical offence and individual involvement in producing objectionable material may be relatively closely located despite no statistical relationship between them. Therefore, where similarities between variables are identified, these must be further tested using statistically reliable methods.

In the current analysis, the reliability of relationships between items grouped together in the SSA plots produced were subjected to Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR20)⁶⁰ test of inter-item correlation. In turn, relationships between individual variables were tested using either chi-square (χ^2) or Fishers exact test (where the criteria for chi square was not satisfied) as measures of significance. These tests were chosen in response to the fact that the data were presented in dichotomous form (indicating that a variable either was or was not identified for each offender). In each such test, where

⁶⁰ Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 is a special form of Chronbachs Alpha used for dichotomous data.

offender data were unavailable for a specific variable they were excluded from the analysis.

Analysis at the Individual Level

The results of the data analysis process led to the development of a number of conclusions regarding the behaviour of Internet censorship offenders and the impact of on and off-line social connections on this behaviour. However, given that the analyses were based on associations between specific behaviours demonstrated by a sample of these individuals as opposed to the cumulative behavioural profile of each individual, additional measures were needed to assess the predictive value of these conclusions in terms of the behaviour of individual offenders. In order to facilitate this assessment, the author drew on a methodology that was previously used by Salfati and Canter (1999) and Fritzson and Garbutt (2001) to compare to the findings of SSA analysis to individual cases of criminal activity. This methodology involved classifying offenders according to the degree to which their offence behaviour matched distinct groupings of offence behaviours identified through SSA analysis. In each case, classification only proceeded if the number of behaviours that an offender demonstrated in relation to one behavioural grouping exceeded the combined total of behaviours relevant to all other potential behavioural groupings. Chapters Five and Six provide further explanation of this classification process, the parameters used to achieve it, and the findings resulting from it.

Case Study Data

Once individual offenders had been classified according to the behavioural groupings identified in the SSA plots, and these groupings had been analysed in terms of the hypotheses developed in the preceding chapters, case studies of individual offenders'

on and off-line offence activities and level of social connectedness were used to qualitatively illustrate the findings. These case studies were drawn from investigative case file notes, CCU checklist data and qualitative comments made by CCU investigators during the process of completing the CCU checklists.

Despite the lack of items specifically asking about offender interaction within on-line networks, information regarding this issue was frequently provided in qualitative form in response to either the question regarding the potential ‘danger’ posed by the offender or the space for any ‘other comments’. During the process of developing the data collection checklist, the CCU investigators had requested that a question regarding the perceived ‘danger’ posed by individual offenders be included. They explained the concept of danger broadly as the probability that a particular offender would be likely to re-offend in the censorship area or commit other offences against the types of individuals portrayed as the subject of the objectionable material (eg. Children). Given the breadth of this definition and the largely intuitive nature of the beliefs that it related to, the question regarding the potential ‘danger’ proposed by individual offenders was deliberately left open ended. This question format was intended to encourage CCU investigators to provide qualitative details justifying or explaining the answers that they gave to it.

The fact that CCU investigators provided information regarding offender networks in support of their answers to the question regarding potential danger of offenders is particularly interesting as it indicates a pre-existing intuitive perception of the importance of this issue. Similarly, CCU investigators’ discussion of network based associations and issues in the additional comments that they made about offenders

suggests that in their experience, offender differences based on these characteristics are salient, at least in terms of how they relate to the investigative process. While the significance of these characteristics may be partly attributable to the pre-existing biases and personal prejudices of the CCU investigators, their heightened attention to this detail is notable, not least in light of the extra work that writing it down required of them. Research has shown that despite a lack of formal analysis and interpretation of offence patterns, the knowledge that law enforcement investigators develop during their professional activities is of significant empirical value. Pinizzotto and Finkel (1990) have shown that experienced police investigators are as likely (if not more so) to make valid predictions of offender behaviour as behavioural scientists, albeit their predictions tend to relate to different behaviours than the predictions of their academic counterparts. Holmes and Holmes (1996) state that in the absence of offender psychopathology, police investigators may be better able to identify potential suspects in criminal cases than behavioural scientists or profilers. Therefore, the potential value of integrating the skills and knowledge of both disciplines in the pursuit of knowledge about specific offence types appears high.

Out of the 149 checklists pertaining to Internet related offences that were provided by CCU investigators, 60 included comments regarding the ‘danger’ posed by offenders and 92 included ‘other comments’. Overall, 112 of the checklists included qualitative data provided in response to at least one of these questions.

Summary

This chapter described the development and use of a data collection tool to facilitate the involvement of the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs Censorship

Compliance Unit (CCU) in the collection of data about the social and behavioural characteristics of 149 Internet censorship offenders detected between 1996 and 2000. The strengths and limitations of this data collection process were discussed, along with the use of specific methodologies and conceptual frameworks to facilitate analysis of the data to test the hypotheses proposed in Chapter Three of this thesis. The following three Chapters of this thesis will present the results of this analysis process. The results presented in Chapter Five will examine the relationship between Internet Censorship Offenders use of Internet applications to facilitate on-line social interaction and their involvement in a range of offence and offence related behaviours. Chapter Six will then review the findings presented in Chapter Five and present additional analyses aimed at clarifying these findings. In turn, the results presented in Chapter Seven will examine the relationship between Internet Censorship Offenders involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material and opportunities for off-line social interaction in their home and work environments.

Chapter 5: The Relationship between On-Line Social Activity and Offending Behaviour

The preceding chapter provided a methodology for the analysis of data collected during the investigation of 145 Internet censorship offenders identified by the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs Censorship Compliance Unit (CCU). This methodology was developed to test the relationship between the on and off-line social connectedness of individual Internet censorship offenders and their level of involvement in offence and offence related activities.

In earlier chapters, research concerning the use of objectionable material and the gratifications achieved as a result of this use was reviewed. This review also considered the relationship between use of objectionable material and involvement in physical offending against individuals similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material selected by individual censorship offenders. Although very little evidence of a direct relationship between Internet censorship offending and physical offending was identified; research concerning other types of media content revealed that social reinforcement regarding media consumption is associated with increased involvement in related activities. Given the lack of interactivity of other modes of media communication, this type of social influence has generally required that associated relationships are formed outside of the media environment. In turn, it is likely that the stigma associated with the content of objectionable material has prevented the

formation of alliances amongst consumers of such material. However, in light of the potential for specific Internet applications to be used to engage in mutually reinforcing social relationships during the process of accessing objectionable material, it was hypothesised that direct, mutually oriented social interaction occurring during the Internet experience may contribute to motivating increased involvement in the Internet based trade of objectionable material. It was also suggested that the desire to maintain relationships formed as a result of on-line interaction may increase the likelihood that individuals will extend their offence activities to include the production of objectionable material for other offenders and, consequently, physical abuse of those involved in the production process.

In contrast to traditional views of media experience occurring in parallel to the social and physical experiences of the non-media environment, the hypotheses presented above require conceptualisation of the Internet as an extension of this environment. As such, social relationships formed during the process of accessing objectionable material via the Internet may reinforce predispositions towards an interest in such material in much the same way as off-line social relationships may encourage or discourage other types of media involvement (eg. household members sharing time in front of the television) and associated activities (eg. pursuing a career as an actor). Whether an individual engages in on-line social interaction thus determines the outcome of the immediate Internet activity and the likelihood of ongoing involvement, both in relation to the consumption of objectionable material and in associated activities. As discussed in Chapter Three, this conceptualisation draws strongly on theories of Expectancy-Value and Age Graded Social Control.

The following chapter presents the results of analyses undertaken as a first step in testing the relationship between on-line social activity and level of involvement in Internet censorship offending and associated activities. These analyses compare the use of socially interactive Internet applications to access objectionable material, and the formation of on-line relationships, against the range of offence related activities engaged in by the current sample of Internet censorship offenders. They attempt to test the hypothesis that offenders who engage in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material will demonstrate a greater degree of involvement in offence and offence related behaviours than offenders who do not engage in on-line interaction (hypothesis (i)).

Analysis Framework

The framework developed in Chapter Four defined specific offender behaviours as indicative of on-line *social connectivity* and others as indicating that offender involvement in Internet censorship offence activities was either relatively *constrained* or *unconstrained*. Constraints on offence related activities are said to be demonstrated by the degree to which individual censorship offenders limit associated behaviours to the minimum necessary to commit the offence. In other words, individuals who engage in on and off-line behaviours that are associated with offending but not necessary for offending to occur⁶¹, may be said to demonstrate fewer constraints (greater involvement) than those who limit their offence behaviours to activities that are directly related to censorship offending⁶² and/or demonstrate behaviours and attributes likely to constrain on-line involvement. In turn, on-line social connectivity is measured by the relative likelihood of offenders engaging in frequent, mutually

⁶¹ eg. collecting large numbers of objectionable images, generating and organising objectionable material, engaging in off-line activities related to the subject of the on-line offences

⁶² eg. consuming small amounts of objectionable material on-line

reinforcing social interactions during the process of accessing objectionable material. Given the limitations of the dataset in terms of qualitatively measuring the actual social connectivity of individual censorship offenders, the current analysis focuses on evidence of on-line social interaction as an indicator of the increased likelihood of greater connectedness. Offenders who use socially interactive Internet applications that facilitate directed, two way communication (such as Email or ICQ) and/or who are identified as maintaining established relationships with other censorship offenders are classified as demonstrating greater likelihood of on-line social connectivity than those who do not⁶³.

Results

SSA analysis of the 16 variables identified as indicative of increased opportunities for on-line social connectivity and constraints, or lack of constraints on Internet censorship offending and associated activities, yielded a two dimensional solution resulting in a coefficient of alienation of 0.199720 after 15 iterations. Figure 3 provides a visual representation of this solution. This Figure has been divided into two main regions (to the right and left of the central vertical line) and four subregions (upper left, upper right, lower left and lower right of the central vertical opaque and horizontal dotted lines). These regions and subregions comprise clusters of variables that appear to be proximally related to each other. The proximal relationships between variables in each regional cluster also appear to distinguish these variables from variables in other regional clusters.

⁶³ Although a socially interactive application, IRC was excluded from this analysis because of the relatively global nature of IRC use amongst the sample of Internet censorship offenders considered. Furthermore, given the possibility of using IRC without participating in direct communication with specific on-line associates, it was not perceived to be as good an indicator of such behaviour (or as 'personal') as ICQ or Email. Both ICQ and Email necessitate direct communication between individuals known (at least on-line) to each other. It is, however, acknowledged that many users did employ IRC to facilitate direct communication with known (at least on-line) others. Such behaviour is qualitatively described in case studies later in this chapter.

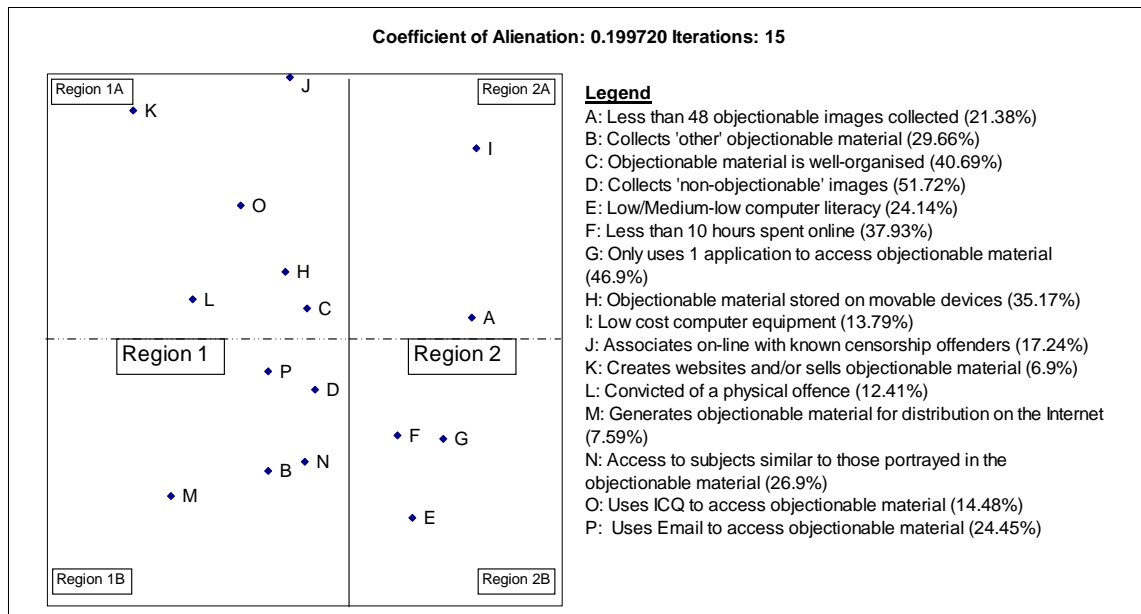


Figure 3: Two dimensional SSA solution for variables identified as indicative of constraints (or lack thereof) on involvement in Internet censorship offending and on-line social connectivity

The following sections of this chapter will review the statistical validity of the regional clusters shown in Figure 3. Where statistical associations are identified between the variables comprising each regional cluster, these will be discussed in terms of the hypothesis presented at the outset of this chapter.

Unconstrained Offence Behaviour and Direct, Personal Interaction during Offence Involvement

As shown in Figure 3, the points representing involvement in activities suggesting few constraints on offence related behaviour and those representing variables associated with increased social connectivity were all located to the left of the vertical line dividing the SSA plot (Region 1). This distribution appears to support the hypothesised association between the use of Internet applications that facilitate directed, two way communication and/or regular on-line interaction with other Internet censorship offenders and relatively unconstrained involvement in Internet

copyright offence related activities. Specifically, it suggests that offenders who are more likely to engage in on-line interaction requiring mutual engagement will be more likely to demonstrate behaviours indicative of increased involvement in Internet copyright offending than those who do not.

Reliability testing using Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR20) revealed an inter-item correlation of 0.7008 between the variables represented in Region 1 of Figure 3. This result suggests consistency between the variables represented in this region. Furthermore, as shown in Table 8, statistically significant associations were identified between offenders using ICQ and Email to access objectionable material and:

- producing objectionable material,
- setting up websites and or selling objectionable material,
- organising the objectionable material they collected,
- accessing objectionable material from sources other than the Internet,
- collecting non-objectionable material of relevance to the objectionable material they selected (eg. Photographs of children and pictures from magazines and advertising material),
- obtaining legitimate access to children and other subjects similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material they selected (eg. as a scout master or soccer coach, caregiver, or teacher),
- having been convicted for a physical crime,
- having previously been convicted for a copyright offence,
- possessing large numbers of objectionable images (in excess of 979),

- spending more than 30 hours on-line⁶⁴ during the week prior to detection, and
- storing the objectionable material that they selected using movable devices

In addition, regular interaction with other Internet censorship offenders during on-line activities was found to be significantly associated with offenders:

- setting up websites and or selling objectionable material,
- organising the objectionable material they collected,
- having previously been convicted for a censorship offence, and
- storing the objectionable material that they selected using movable devices.

⁶⁴ Due to the inclusion of the variable pertaining to offenders spending less than 10 hours in the previous week on-line, the variable pertaining to offenders spending more than 30 hours on-line was not included in the SSA analysis. SSA analysis of dichotomous data assumes that all variables are mutually independent (e.g. the existence of one variable does not preclude the existence of another). Although ordinal data may be subject to multi-dimensional scaling, such an analysis would have excluded many of the other variables included in Figure 3.

Table 8: Statistically significant associations between use of Email and ICQ to access objectionable material and/or regular on-line association with known censorship offenders, and behavioural indicators of unconstrained offence and offence related behaviour

	Use of Email and/or ICQ to access objectionable material (N = 48)		Use of Email to access objectionable material (N = 34)		Use of ICQ to access objectionable material (N = 21)		Regular interaction with other known censorship offenders during on-line activities (N = 25)	
	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Found in possession of more than 979 objectionable images (N = 29)	11 (28/45/135)	n.s	10 (28/34/135)	n.s	8 (28/21/135)	p = 0.043 (FET)	8 (29/24/137)	n.s
Has produced objectionable material (N = 11)	9 (10/48/141)	p = 0.000 (FET)	8 (10/34/141)	p = 0.000 (FET)	4 (10/21/141)	p = 0.042 (FET)	2 (11/25/145)	n.s
Has set up websites and/or sold objectionable material (N = 10)	6 (8/48/141)	p = 0.000 (FET)	5 (8/34/141)	p = 0.020 (FET)	3 (8/21/141)	n.s	5 (10/25/145)	p = 0.014 (FET)
Uses identifiable system to organise objectionable material (N = 59)	26 (58/48/141)	p = 0.024 ($\chi^2 = 5.104$)	19 (58/34/141)	p = 0.045 ($\chi^2 = 4.024$)	16 (58/21/141)	p = 0.001 ($\chi^2 = 10.880$) (YCC)	16 (59/25/145)	p = 0.009 ($\chi^2 = 6.802$)
Possesses Objectionable material obtained from sources other than the Internet (N = 43)	17 (41/48/141)	p = 0.048 ($\chi^2 = 3.894$)	15 (41/34/141)	n.s	6 (41/21/141)	n.s	10 (43/25/145)	n.s
Collects non-objectionable material relevant to the content of the objectionable material selected (N = 75)	30 (73/48/141)	p = 0.029 ($\chi^2 = 4.783$)	26 (73/34/141)	p = 0.001 ($\chi^2 = 10.945$)	11 (73/21/141)	n.s	16 (75/25/145)	n.s

(YCC) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (FET) = Fishers exact test, n.s. = not statistically significant

Table 8 (continued): Statistically significant associations between use of Email and ICQ to access objectionable material and/or regular on-line association with known censorship offenders, and behavioural indicators of unconstrained offence and offence related behaviour.

	Use of Email and/or ICQ to access objectionable material (N = 48)		Use of Email to access objectionable material (N = 34)		Use of ICQ to access objectionable material (N = 21)		Regular interaction with other known censorship offenders during on-line activities (N = 25)	
	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Has access to children and other potential subjects through work, home or voluntary activities (N = 39)	20 (38/48/141)	$p = 0.005$ ($\chi^2 = 8.006$)	17 (38/34/141)	$p = 0.001$ ($\chi^2 = 10.597$) (YCC)	9 (38/21/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	7 (39/25/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Has been convicted of a physical offence (N = 18)	11 (18/48/141)	$p = 0.004$ ($\chi^2 = 8.399$) (YCC)	7 (18/34/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	9 (18/21/141)	$p = 0.000$ (FET)	4 (18/25/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Has been convicted of a sexual offence (N = 12)	7 (12/48/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	6 (12/34/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	5 (12/21/141)	$p = 0.018$ (FET)	3 (12/25/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Has previously been convicted of a censorship offence (N = 5)	4 (5/48/141)	$p = 0.036$ (FET)	4 (5/34/141)	$p = 0.012$ (FET)	1 (5/21/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (5/25/145)	$p = 0.036$ (FET)
Spent more than 30 hours on-line during the week prior to conviction (N = 21)	12 (21/42/119)	$p = 0.014$ ($\chi^2 = 6.045$) (YCC)	9 (21/33/119)	<i>n.s.</i>	7 (21/19/119)	$p = 0.042$ (FET)	6 (21/23/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Stores objectionable material using movable device (N = 51)	30 (49/45/122)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 19.286$)	20 (49/34/122)	$p = 0.009$ ($\chi^2 = 6.829$)	19 (49/21/122)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 24.249$) (YCC)	15 (51/23/126)	$p = 0.015$ ($\chi^2 = 5.947$) (YCC)

(YCC) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (FET) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant

Constrained Offence Involvement

In contrast to the relatively high inter-item correlation between the variables represented in Region 1 of Figure 3, analysis of inter-item correlations between the variables represented in Region 2 of the Figure 3 (to the right of the central dividing line) revealed a KR20 alpha coefficient of 0.4836. This result suggests a low level of consistency between the variables represented in this region. Therefore, demonstrating one behaviour indicative of constraints of Internet censorship offence behaviour does not appear to be indicative of demonstrating multiple such behaviours. Nevertheless, it is noted that the low number of variables associated in Region 2 of Figure 3 may have contributed to this finding. Indeed, it is noteworthy that despite this finding, statistical analysis of the cluster of variables represented in Region 2 of Figure 3 revealed that offenders who spent less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation were significantly likely to only use one Internet application to access objectionable material (Table 9). Similarly, significant associations were identified between offenders being described as demonstrating low levels of computer literacy and:

- being found in possession of less than 48 objectionable images, and
- spending less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation.

Table 9: Statistically significant associations between computer literacy, use of only one application to access objectionable material, number of hours on-line, and number of images found in offenders possession.

	Lower levels of computer literacy (<i>N</i> = 36)		Only one Internet application used to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 68)	
	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Found in Possession of less than 48 objectionable images (<i>N</i> = 31)	13 (30/34/133)	<i>p</i> = 0.018 (χ^2 = 5.640) (<i>YCC</i>)	18 (30/65/135)	<i>n.s.</i>
Spent less than 10 hours on- line during the week prior to conviction (<i>N</i> = 55)	26 (52/33/118)	<i>p</i> = 0.000 (χ^2 = 25.900)	32 (54/58/119)	<i>p</i> = 0.033 (χ^2 = 4.532)

n.s. = not statistically significant

Despite the relative lack of internal consistency between the variables represented in Region 2 of Figure 3; the spatial distinction between Region 1 and Region 2 behaviours suggests that offenders who demonstrated even one behaviour indicative of constraints on Internet censorship offending were unlikely to demonstrate behaviours indicative of high involvement in Internet censorship offending. Additional analysis provides statistical support for this distinction. As shown in Table 10, significant negative associations were identified between offenders only using one Internet application to access objectionable material and offenders:

- producing objectionable material,
- organising the objectionable material they collected,
- accessing objectionable material from sources other than the Internet,
- collecting non-objectionable material of relevance to the objectionable material they selected (eg. Photographs of children and pictures from magazines and advertising material),

- obtaining legitimate access to children and other subjects similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material they selected (eg. as a scout master or soccer coach, caregiver or teacher), and
- having been convicted for a physical crime.

Similarly, offenders who used identifiable systems to organise the objectionable material that they collected were also found to be unlikely to possess less than 48 objectionable images and unlikely to demonstrate low levels of computer literacy. In turn, offenders who spent less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation were identified as statistically unlikely to possess computer equipment of high resale value or to be found in possession of a large number of objectionable images.

Table 10: Statistically significant associations between variables represented in Region 1 of Figure 3 and variables represented in Region 2 of Figure 3

	Lower levels of computer literacy ($N = 36$)		Only one Internet application used to access objectionable material ($N = 68$)		Less than 48 objectionable images ($N = 31$)		Less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to conviction ($N = 55$)	
	Frequency (Valid N : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N : row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Uses identifiable system to organise objectionable material ($N = 59$)	9 (57/35/137)	$p = 0.027$ ($\chi^2 = 4.886$) ^N	22 (58/68/141)	$p = 0.041$ ($\chi^2 = 4.183$) ^N	2 (58/31/137)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 21.133$) ^N	22 (57/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Possesses objectionable material obtained from sources other than images the Internet ($N = 43$)	7 (40/35/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (41/68/141)	$p = 0.012$ ($\chi^2 = 6.318$) ^N	7 (38/31/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	10 (32/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Collects non-objectionable material relevant to the content of the objectionable material selected ($N = 75$)	15 (72/35/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	22 (73/68/141)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 19.839$) ^N	13 (72/31/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	27 (64/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Has produced objectionable material ($N = 11$)	5 (11/35/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	0 (10/68/141)	$p = 0.001$ (<i>FET</i>) ^N	2 (10/31/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	2 (11/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Has been convicted of a physical offence ($N = 18$)	2 (17/35/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (18/68/141)	$p = 0.025$ ($\chi^2 = 5.049$) ^N (<i>YCC</i>)	1 (18/31/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (16/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Regular interaction with other known censorship offenders during on-line activities ($N = 25$)	3 (22/35/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	7 (24/68/141)	$p = 0.040$ ($\chi^2 = 4.208$) ^N	3 (24/31/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	7 (23/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N=Negative Association

Table 10 (continued): Statistically significant associations between variables represented in Region 1 of Figure 3 and variables represented in Region 2 of Figure 3

	Lower levels of computer literacy (<i>N</i> = 36)		Only one Internet application used to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 68)		Less than 48 objectionable images (<i>N</i> = 31) Error! Bookmark not defined.		Less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to conviction (<i>N</i> = 55) Error! Bookmark not defined.	
	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Has access to children and other potential subjects through work, home or voluntary activities (<i>N</i> = 39)	10 (36/35/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	12 (38/68/141)	$p = 0.016 (\chi^2 = 5.774)^N$	7 (37/31/137)	<i>n.s.</i>	18 (36/55/121)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of ICQ to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 21)	3 (20/34/134)	<i>n.s.</i>	1 (21/68/141)	$p = 0.000 (\chi^2 = 18.670)^N$	2 (21/30/135)	<i>n.s.</i>	6 (19/54/119)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Email to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 34)	9 (32/34/134)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (34/68/141)	$p = 0.000 (\chi^2 = 27.860)^N$	7 (34/30/135)	<i>n.s.</i>	11 (33/54/119)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 46)	11 (36/34/134)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (46/68/141)	$p = 0.000 (\chi^2 = 47.560)^N$	7 (46/30/135)	<i>n.s.</i>	17 (45/54/119)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Websites to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 50)	13 (50/34/134)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (50/68/141)	$p = 0.000 (\chi^2 = 55.327)^N$	10 (50/30/135)	<i>n.s.</i>	17 (49/54/119)	<i>n.s.</i>
Found in possession of more than 979 objectionable images (<i>N</i> = 29)	1 (28/34/133)	<i>n.s.</i>	12 (28/65/135)	<i>n.s.</i>	0 (29/31/137)	-	7 (26/54/119)	$p = 0.033 (\chi^2 = 4.571)^N$
Found in possession of computer value of high resale value (<i>N</i> = 28)	4 (28/29/110)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (28/54/111)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (28/21/111)	<i>n.s.</i>	6 (27/48/110)	$p = 0.010 (\chi^2 = 6.672)^N$

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N=Negative Association

Consideration of these results suggests that the variable pertaining to use of only one application to access objectionable material exerted the greatest influence on polarising the variables represented in Regions 1 and 2 of Figure 3. Most notably, given the hypothesised association between increased involvement in Internet censorship offending and offenders engaging in mutually reinforcing on-line interaction, the variable pertaining to use of only one application to access objectionable material was found to be negatively associated with use of Email and ICQ to access objectionable material and with regular on-line interaction with other known censorship offenders (Table 10). It was, however, significantly associated with selection of IRC as the application of choice, or rather; failure to select any other application. Analysis of the results of offenders who only used IRC to access objectionable material via the Internet revealed similar results to those of individuals who only used one application in terms of demonstrating relatively constrained offence behaviour (and associated activities)⁶⁵.

Relative Constraints and Social Connectivity of Individual Offenders

The results presented in the preceding section appear to provide support for a distinction between behaviours indicating constraints on Internet censorship offence behaviour and those indicating increased involvement in Internet censorship offending. More importantly, they also provide support for the hypothesised

⁶⁵ As such, offenders who only used IRC to access objectionable material were identified as unlikely to collect objectionable material other than images acquired via the Internet ($\chi^2(1, N=141) = 9.856, p=0.002$), unlikely to collect non-objectionable material of relevance to the objectionable material that they selected ($\chi^2(1, N=141) = 14.337, p=0.000$), unlikely to organise the objectionable material that they did collect ($\chi^2(1, N=141) = 6.055, p=0.014$), unlikely to be involved in generating objectionable material (Fishers exact test, $p=0.006$ – none of them were involved in this practice), and unlikely to maintain access to individuals similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material they selected ($\chi^2(1, N=141) = 9.853, p=0.002$). They were also significantly unlikely to have spent more than 30 hours using the Internet during the week prior to investigation by the CCU ($\chi^2(1, N=119) = 7.191, p=0.007$), and tended to demonstrate very low levels of computer literacy (Fishers exact test, $p=0.014$ – 6 of the 7 individuals identified as demonstrating very low levels of computer literacy only used IRC to access objectionable material).

association between unconstrained offence behaviour and social connectivity. However, the behaviourally focused nature of the analyses does not preclude the possibility that individual offenders may demonstrate behaviours from more than one region of the SSA plot. It may be argued that the specific associations employed during SSA and KR20 analysis increase the likelihood that behaviours demonstrated in single cases will be located in the same regions, however, in order to test this argument, individual examination of each case is necessary. Therefore, an attempt was made to classify individual offenders on the basis of whether their offence behaviours were more suggestive of constrained or unconstrained behaviour (as associated with the variables represented in Regions 1 and 2 of Figure 3). To facilitate this process, each offender in the current sample was given a score for the number of behaviours they demonstrated that were identified as indicating a lack of constraint on investment in offending (Region 1). Each offender was also given a score for the number of behaviours they demonstrated that were identified as indicating constraints on investment in offending (Region 2).

In preparation for later assessment of the degree to which indicators of social connectivity predict unconstrained offence behaviour, variables pertaining to offenders using ICQ or Email to access objectionable material, and/or associating on-line with other censorship offenders were not counted as part of these scores. Excluding variables pertaining to social connectivity, KR20 analysis of the Region 1 variables revealed an inter-item correlation of (alpha value) of 0.6258. Due to the higher number of variables in Region 1 than Region 2 of Figure 3, scores were given as a proportion (number of variables for the offender divided by the total number of variables in the region). Classification according to one region (eg. indicating

constrained offence activities) was made if the score for that region exceeded the score of the other region (eg. indicating unconstrained offence activities). A similar method of classifying data generated using SSA has previously been used by Salfati and Canter (1999) and Fritzson and Garbutt (2001).

Of the 145 Internet censorship offenders sampled, 70 were found to primarily demonstrate offence behaviours indicative of relatively unconstrained involvement in Internet censorship offending. In turn, 74 offenders were identified as primarily demonstrating behaviours that indicated constrained involvement in Internet censorship offending and one offender could not be classified according to either type of offence orientation. The mean difference between the proportionate scores for behaviours associated with relatively constrained and unconstrained offence involvement was 0.3. An average of 2.4 variables distinguished individuals classified as demonstrating relatively unconstrained offence behaviour, while an average of 1.2 variables distinguished offenders classified as demonstrating relatively constrained offence behaviour.

Further analysis revealed that offenders who demonstrated a higher proportion of unconstrained offence behaviours (as identified in Region 1 of Figure 3) were significantly more likely than offenders who primarily demonstrated constrained offence behaviours (as identified in Region 2 of Figure 3) to use ICQ to access objectionable material, to use Email to access objectionable material, and to associate on-line with known censorship offenders (Table 11). This finding supports the value of indicators of on-line social connectivity in predicting the level of involvement in

Internet censorship offending and associated activities of individual offenders, or vice versa.

Table 11: Statistically significant associations between offenders demonstrating a higher proportion of unconstrained offence behaviours and indicators of on-line social connectivity.

	Offenders predominantly demonstrating behaviours consistent with Region 1 of Figure 3 ($N = 70$)	
	Frequency (Valid N : row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Used ICQ to access objectionable material ($N = 21$)	18 (21/67/140)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 14.189$)
Used Email to access objectionable material ($N = 34$)	25 (34/67/140)	$p = 0.001$ ($\chi^2 = 11.860$)
Known to associate on-line with known censorship offenders ($N = 25$)	18 (25/70/144)	$p = 0.010$ ($\chi^2 = 6.625$)

Subtypes of Offence Behaviour

In addition to demonstrating an association between variables identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained censorship offence behaviour (and associated activities) and variables identified as indicative of on-line social connectivity, the distribution of points plotted on Figure 3 suggests at least two subgroups of constrained, and two subgroups of relatively unconstrained offence behaviour (and associated activities). Subgroups of variables are distinguished by the horizontal dotted line bisecting the vertical dividing line drawn on the SSA plot in Figure 3. Subgroups of variable pertaining to relatively unconstrained offence behaviour (and associated activities) are labelled Region 1A and Region 1B, and subgroups of variables pertaining to relatively constrained offence behaviour (and associated activities) are labelled Region 2A and Region 2B.

Although the small number of variables identified as indicative of constrained censorship offence behaviour preclude comparison of regional subgroups 2A and 2B, in the case of variables pertaining to relatively unconstrained censorship offence

behaviour (and associated activities) discussion of the regional subgroups (1A and 1B) appears warranted. Specifically, Region 1A variables include offenders:

- organising their collections of objectionable material,
- storing objectionable material on movable devices,
- creating websites and/or selling objectionable material,
- associating on-line with known censorship offenders,
- possessing a prior conviction for a physical crime,
- and using ICQ to access objectionable material,

In contrast, Region 1B variables include offenders:

- being found in possession of objectionable material other than electronic images,
- collecting non-objectionable images of individuals similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material that they selected,
- generating or producing objectionable material for on-line distribution,
- using Email to access objectionable material.

In terms of the variables located in Region 1A of Figure 3, KR20 analysis revealed an inter-item correlation of 0.6281. In turn, inter-item correlation of the variables located in Region 1B resulted in a KR20 Alpha value of 0.6209.

Distinguishing Offenders According to the Behaviours Represented in each Subregion of Figure 3

In order to assess the degree to which the behaviours of individual Internet censorship offenders conformed to the subregions identified in Figure 3, a classification process similar to that used to distinguish offenders according to Region 1 and Region 2 variables was employed. Each offender in the current sample was given a score based on the number of behaviours in each of the subregions that were recorded in his or her CCU checklist. Given the low number of behaviours identified in Regions 2A and 2B, and the lack of associated KR20 value for these regions, the five (5) variables pertaining to relatively constrained offence behaviours were amalgamated into a single score. In addition, due to the higher number of variables in Region 1A than the other two regions, scores were given as a proportion (number of variables for the offender divided by the total number of variables in the region). Classification according to a specific region was only made if the score for that region exceeded the combined scores of the two remaining regions.

Using these scores to identify dominant behaviours, 113 of the sample of 145 Internet censorship offenders were able to be classified according to the subregions portrayed in Figure 3. Of these, 23 offenders were identified as primarily demonstrating behaviours consistent with subregion 1A, 37 offenders were identified as primarily demonstrating behaviours consistent with subregion 1B, and 53 offenders were found to primarily demonstrate behaviours consistent with Region 2 of Figure 3 (See Figure 4). The mean difference between the proportionate scores for dominant subregional behaviours and the combined total of non-dominant subregional behaviours was 0.31. On average, 1.9 variables distinguished offenders who primarily demonstrated

subregion 1A behaviours and 1.5 variables distinguished offenders who primarily demonstrated subregion 1B or subregion 2 behaviours.

In addition to providing increased insight into the behaviours of individual Internet censorship offenders, and further clarifying the differences between them, these findings provides increased support for the association between relatively unconstrained offence behaviour and on-line social connectivity at the individual level. Furthermore, the results also suggest consistency in the offence behaviours of individual offenders across time. In the case of the three offenders for whom data pertaining to previous censorship offences were available, classification was found to remain consistent across years of offending. One of these offenders was found to consistently demonstrate a greater proportion of behaviours associated with subregion 1B of Figure 3. The other two were found to consistently demonstrate a greater proportion of behaviours associated with subregion 1A of Figure 3. Of the latter, one offender was found to demonstrate these behaviours across three different years of offending.

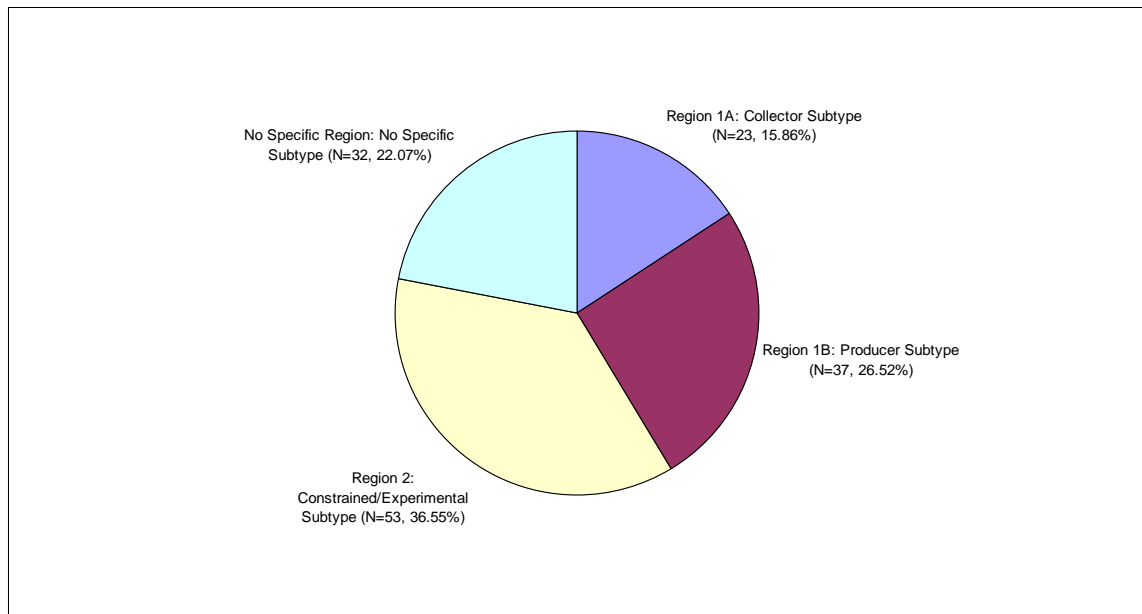


Figure 4: Regions and subregions of the SSA plot presented in Figure 3 to which the behaviours of individual censorship offenders conformed

Before attempting to identify the social and behavioural significance of offender classification according to the variables clustered in the subregions of Figure 3, additional analyses were undertaken to check the relationship between these variables and indicators of unconstrained offence behaviour not included in the SSA analysis⁶⁶. These analyses revealed significant associations between offenders predominantly demonstrating behaviours consistent with subregion 1A of Figure 3 and offenders demonstrating high levels of computer literacy, using the Internet for more than 30 hours during the week prior to investigation, and possessing more than 979 objectionable images (Table 12). In addition, use of three or more Internet applications to access objectionable material was significantly associated with

⁶⁶ These other indicators of unconstrained offence behaviour included the opposing values of variables identified as indicative of constrained offence behaviour. As such, they were not included in the SSA analysis because their presence would have undermined the requirement that all such variables be mutually independent.

offenders predominantly demonstrating behaviours consistent with both subregion 1A and 1B of Figure 3⁶⁷.

Table 12: Statistically significant associations between offenders demonstrating behaviours consistent with subregions 1A or 1B of Figure 3 and offenders demonstrating high levels of computer skill, high hours on-line, use of 3 or more applications to access objectionable material, and being found in possession of large numbers of objectionable images.

	Offenders predominantly demonstrating behaviours consistent with subregion 1A of Figure 3 (<i>N</i> = 23)		Offenders predominantly demonstrating behaviours consistent with subregion 1B of Figure 3 (<i>N</i> = 37)	
	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.
Demonstrates high levels of computer literacy (<i>N</i> = 57)	15 (43/23/109)	$p = 0.009$ ($\chi^2 = 6.794$) (YCC)	15 (43/35/109)	<i>n.s.</i>
Spent more than 30 hours on-line during the week prior to conviction (<i>N</i> = 21)	8 (18/21/98)	$p = 0.022$ (FET)	6 (18/28/98)	<i>n.s.</i>
Found in possession of more than 979 objectionable images (<i>N</i> = 29)	15 (22/23/109)	$p = 0.000$ (FET)	5 (22/33/109)	<i>n.s.</i>
Used three or more Internet applications to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 41)	12 (34/22/110)	$p = 0.015$ ($\chi^2 = 5.877$) (YCC)	18 (34/35/110)	$p = 0.001$ ($\chi^2 = 10.121$)

Collectors Subtype: Subregion 1A

The variables included in subregion 1A of Figure 3 implies the existence of a group of offenders who actively ‘collect’ objectionable material, as opposed to simply consuming it. Taken together, the processes involved in purposefully spending large amounts of time accumulating, organising and saving substantial numbers of objectionable images to movable storage devices suggests that offenders attach psychological significance to possession of the material involved. As discussed in chapter two, these conclusions are supported by the findings of research into the phenomenon of collecting, both within the context of objectionable material and more

⁶⁷ albeit to a lesser degree for offenders predominantly demonstrating behaviours associated in Region 1A of Figure 3

generally (eg. Coles et al, 2003, Frost and Hartl, 1996; Lanning, 1992; Quayle and Taylor, 2002a). Specifically, the fact that material is saved in a movable form appears to suggest a desire to protect the material itself, either from detection or corruption, and/or to keep the material accessible at all times.

The following case studies illustrate the specificity of the 'collecting' orientation to offending demonstrated by offenders whose behaviours were consistent with subregion 1A of Figure 3.

Defendant F was trading objectionable material with [other censorship offenders known to the CCU all of whom are members of IRC chatroom] #gaydunedin #gaydar. I was surprised to have caught him a second time actually as he thanked me for having caught him the first time - he had great concern that his life had shrunk to the Internet world and was (after seizure of his PC) then free to check out his farm again etc. He was very unlucky to have been caught a second time as he avoided IRC after his first encounter with DIA and only traded with known persons or in E-groups where you had to send image files first to join (i.e. unlikely to have enforcement officers in them). He had taken his PC to a repair shop and in trying to fix it they noted a child porn file, and called the Police. They knew the defendant's history and called the Department of Internal Affairs. This defendant has the dubious honour of being the first New Zealander to be convicted twice for trading child pornography via Internet. On the first occasion he was found in possession of 1500 images obtained using IRC, Websites, ICQ, Newsgroups and Email. On the second he was found in possession of an additional 750 images. Many of the images from both his first and second conviction were also found on the computers of his on-line associates, often organised using the same labels. In addition, during the second investigation examination of the defendants computer logs revealed that he had chatted to an American 'boylover' as a 15 year old schoolboy. He invented sexual scenarios about which he (as himself) corresponded to the person, and then corresponded about the same event as the boy! He included many 'every day' events and many of the chats from the 'boy' did not include sexual references etc at all - when asked about it he said he did this as an amusement and also because he was 'excited' by the idea

of the sexual scenarios as experienced by the boy - and discussing them as the boy! The other material made it more real to them (even though they both knew they were really chatting with adult males at all times.

Defendant G is [described as being] committed to the collection of child porn in any form and the image collection ranges from boys clothed to sexual activity. Images are primarily boys under 15 years of age. On-line interactions with at least four other offenders known to the CCU are logged on his computer. He accesses and downloads images from different Internet sources, IRC (regular participant on #familysex, #gaywelli, gaysm), newsgroups etc. Caught in possession of a large, well organised collection of 13000 images of child porn on a hard drive. The collection is believed to have been transported from user to user and installed to their computers. Logs show defendant actively offering objectionable material to others during on-line interaction.

Defendant I is 46 years old and lives with his partner. He works [in a senior position] for a large security company. He was detected as a result of a complaint to the Department of Internal Affairs. Investigation revealed 2405 objectionable images showing female children of Caucasian, Asian and Hispanic origin engaged in a variety of sexual activity, frequently involving adults. These were stored on removable hard drives and disks. The defendant was identified as having no criminal history; however, as a result of our penetration of his Email system, many criminals who targeted children for sexual reasons were arrested in Europe. He was identified as a frequent traveller. During the week prior to investigation he spent in excess of 30 hours on-line. All of this activity occurred outside of work hours. He used IRC, Websites, ICQ, Newsgroups and Email to access objectionable images. After saving these images he used mail to forward them on to his European associates. He also offered objectionable images on-line via Newsgroups and IRC. His wife, who subsequently left for Australia with him, said that although he had photographed her committing sexual acts, which he posted to newsgroups and Emailed to 'perverts', he preferred to act out his sexual fantasies alone - frequenting public toilets for sex and masturbating with strangers. She indicated that he was suspected of sexually

abusing the family dog. Prior to his current position he had been a policeman. His reason for leaving the force is unknown.

Defendant J is 46 years old and lives alone, however, at the time of investigation his brother and nephew were staying at his house. He was detected as a result of a complaint to the Department of Internal Affairs and found in possession of 37,174 objectionable images. These images featured a wide range of sexual acts involving both male and female children, some of which included bestiality. He was also found in possession of a large well organised collection of non-objectionable images of children. The images were organised thematically and stored on Hard drive, CD-ROM, Hard copy and VCDs. The offender had no known criminal history and was employed as a trade's person. During the week prior to his investigation he had logged 65 Internet hours on his home computer. He used IRC, ICQ, Website, Newsgroups and Email to access objectionable material and to offer objectionable material to others. He also used Newsgroups to advertise pay to view websites supplying pictures of small boys that he had set up with two North American associates, who he had met on-line. He is well organised and makes money by setting up members only areas on websites. He had established a clientele of about 700 persons who paid into a website account in New Mexico, USA. The US Customs are presently investigating their citizens who offended by accessing these websites. Defendant J has no computer training and appears to have learnt his skills on-line. He also possesses a digital camera and scanning equipment,

Defendant K is 34 years old and is flatting in a house with two others. Each has their own room and the Defendant is reported as rarely leaving his when he is at home. He works as a computer programmer and is almost constantly on-line either for work (worked a lot from home via remote access server) or leisure and was found to be offending both at home and work. Defendant K uses IRC, Website, Newsgroups, Email to access and distribute objectionable material and was found to have more than 1000 objectionable images classifiable under Sections 3.2A, 3.2B, 3.2D, 3.2E and 3.2F of the New Zealand Films, Videos and Publications Act in his possession. These included images of Caucasian, Hispanic, and Asian female children and adults [being subjected to explicitly harmful acts and actions] (often demonstrating physical

expressions of fear), incest, bestiality, and [degrading acts (often involving urine or faeces)]. He was also found to possess 400 examples of objectionable text, and 26 moving computer images as well as R18 images (large collection of Penthouse type files on computer, collection of overseas 'R18' CD-ROMS featuring adult women posing), magazines and videos, adult type video clips and adult text stories. The objectionable material was stored on his computer, zip drive and CD Roms.

In addition to illustrating the focused nature of offenders' collecting behaviour, these cases studies demonstrate the way in which on-line social relationships are used by Internet censorship offenders during the collection of objectionable material to facilitate access to such material, and how these offenders support each other in the collecting process. Indeed, even in the case pertaining to the offender who actively marketed objectionable material for financial profit, on-line relationships were acknowledged as contributing to the development of his skill in using the computer. Taylor (1999) highlights similar instances of the apparently altruistic nature of Internet censorship offenders' interactions with each other. Taylor (1999) and Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) suggest that the provision of tips and advice about how to improve access to objectionable material and avoid detection by law enforcement agencies may serve to increase the social ties between offenders, as well as providing those who impart the information with social status in relation to their on-line activities. As indicated by the following case file note, in the current sample this support was often offered despite the risks it posed in terms of the potential for offender identification.

Defendant E had been using an open proxy to hide away on the Internet instead of showing up as a New Zealander. However, he saw our officer in a channel under a New Zealand

identity and approached him to give advice on how to hide saying "take it from another New Zealander"

In addition to the instrumental focus of on-line support provided to collectors of objectionable material by other Internet censorship offenders, however, cases of individual offence involvement demonstrate a quality of on-line relationship beyond that necessary to facilitate acquisition of objectionable material. As such, offenders appear to receive mutual reinforcement from sharing their fantasies and interacting about the content of the objectionable material on-line. This observation was also made by Censorship compliance investigators involved in the investigation of offences.

Defendant X [said he] posed as a 14 yr old girl on IRC because he wanted to see what other people would believe...he [said he] 'got off' on posing as a young girl and talking to men about sex etc. He had a general interest in sexual images (including some gay ones) but most files were of young girls. [His] collection was not large [but] he was not a skilled user and had only been on Internet about 4 months. Also [his] graphics card was only 16 bit and the images he had could not fully be 'appreciated'. He seems to have 'got off' on the conversations and trading as much as the image content per se ...

Producing Subtype: Subregion 1B

In contrast to the associations represented in Subregion 1A of Figure 3, the associations between variables located in subregion 1B of Figure 3 suggest the existence of a form of offending focusing on the production, rather than the collection, of objectionable material. The material produced included numerous stories of child abuse, as well as photographic and video productions. Of note is that Internet censorship offenders who primarily engaged in Region 1B behaviours were

significantly likely to have made the ‘other’ objectionable material (material other than images obtained via the Internet) found in their possession⁶⁸. Similarly, seven of these offenders had also produced their own ‘non-objectionable material’ pertaining to the content of the objectionable material that they selected, including photos of young people to whom they had access through work or voluntary activities. In turn, this ‘non-objectionable’ material was sometimes used to illustrate the objectionable stories that they produced.

In support of the production focused orientation of offenders who primarily demonstrated behaviours consistent with subregion 1B of Figure 3, none of the variables identified in Region 1B of the SSA plot were associated with the collection of sizable numbers of objectionable images. Furthermore, case studies of individual offence and offence related behaviours demonstrate the distinction between this group of offenders and those who appear to focus their offence activities on collecting.

Defendant A has amassed a collection of pictures of young boys in a wide variety of formats: on his PC, CD-ROM, floppy disk, handwritten stories, folders into which he has secured photos, slides, negatives, newspapers clippings, advertising material, video recordings. The defendant was active in the Boy Scout movement in [location name] for many years. There is a quantity of material in his collection that he has taken of the boys in the scout group to which he belonged. None of the images could be considered objectionable. He has also taken covert footage of the milk boy during his delivery, and taken a number of covert photos of the paperboy. Images of this footage have been looped to repeat specific scenes. He has also created video recordings solely consisting of TV adverts that depict young boys. 6 of the video recordings have been made by filming pictures of the boy scouts [with whom he worked]. For these he has created covers detailing the subject and the activities engaged in. He has created 12 folders using file

⁶⁸ Fishers exact test, $p = 0.000$; 8 of these offenders had made other objectionable material themselves out of a total 9 offenders identified in this form of production.

folders into which he has stuck pictures of young boys (in excess of 1000 pictures). He has also created 2 lists he has called sightings in which he details the occasions when he had observed boys that were attractive to him. One [on-line chat] log contains an entry to the effect that it took an effort of will not to kidnap and have his way with the 8 year old boy. The defendant stated he had written stories which were 'his fantasies' - highly sexually explicit stories involving the real names of scouts he has had access to; He denies any physical offending, offering that he found images of boys 7 and 8 years old attractive. The video recordings range from commercial product to video he has created by filming still images in his collection, and focusing on the genitals of the subjects. On one video his heavy breathing can be heard. 6 of the video recordings have been made by filming pictures of the boy scouts. For these he has created covers detailing the subject and the activities engaged in. The defendant has written extensively about sexual activity within the cub packs, naming actual cubs he supervised. He states that it is his fantasy, and he would never physically offend. The defendant had also obtained and used picture editing applications to 'improve' the images that he had obtained.

Defendant C had created (very successfully if the chat sessions and replies to emails from other men are to be believed) a whole family (including 2 girls, a boy, their friend (a young girl), a dog and their father). He entered into chat sessions and corresponded by electronic and hard copy letter as all of them (well, except the dog obviously). He wrote stories about the sexual exploits of this family (including incest between the father and girls and father and boy, lesbian relations between the girls and their friend, bestiality between the girl and her dog, and an orgy which involved everyone. He backed his stories and emails with images pulled off the internet and one scanned picture from his lounge wall of him and his wife, sent (while speaking as 'joanne- a 13 yr old girl from [place name]) saying it was (her) parents. Defendant C involved great detail in his stories including the feelings of the girls about sex and relationships generally. He had clearly given it a great deal of thought. Clear sexual interest in incest, and images/text stories/videos depicting it, the risk is considered only limited by his access to suitable subjects. During the inquiry defendant C's daughter (now in her 40s) stated that he had sexually abused her as a child - she had dissociated herself from the family and changed her name following the suspected abuse of her own daughters by defendant C but did not tell police. Defendant C was

also warned in relation to trying to 'touch up' his granddaughters aged 9 and 12. Noted to be using IRC, websites, ICQ, newsgroups and email.

Defendant D detailed his offending over a 20 year period to a friend on the Internet. The friend was also into 'upskirt' material and on receipt of the defendant's tapes would add them to his tapes and sell copies over the Internet. The defendant started as a peeping tom and gradually improved his abilities in viewing people in various situations. From peeping in windows and caravans he progressed to laying under the floor of bathing changing rooms. He then became involved in using a camera in a banana bag to film upskirts but found that finding subjects with no underwear was rather hit and miss. He therefore used a monitor in a second bag at waist height but this was seen by some people and resulted in his arrest (I understand that he was assaulted by some of the crowd in this situation). He then progressed to a pinhole camera in his shoe and over a period of time in picking his victims. He managed to collect film of up to 3500 females in the [location name] region. The defendant's collection was mainly in relation to catching females unaware, in particular the 'upskirt' type pictures and females urinating in a public place. He also had pictures of autopsies and 'impalings'. The subdirectories were titled 'bizarre', 'toilet' and were under a directory called 'Cabinet'. He also had bestiality pictures.

As demonstrated in these case studies, on-line interaction initiated by producers of objectionable material appears to be less focused on accessing examples of this material than on having others read, view and/or believe their productions. Indeed, although the production of objectionable material may be conceived of as a byproduct of abuse, in the case of these offenders the material they created showed little evidence that abuse had actually occurred. Furthermore, even if their 'offerings' were based on actual events, in the absence of an association between producing and selling objectionable material, their motive for on-line distribution appears almost primarily social.

Constrained/Experimental Subtype: Subregions 2A and 2B

In comparison to offenders who actively collected or produced objectionable material for on-line distribution, very little consistency was evident in the patterns of offending demonstrated by offenders who primarily engaged in behaviours identified as indicative of constraints on Internet censorship involvement. Indeed, given the lack of any logical explanation as to why offenders who only use one Internet application to access objectionable material from the Internet would be significantly unlikely to access objectionable material other than images obtained from the Internet, collect non-objectionable images relevant to their interest in objectionable material, access individuals similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material or other such non computer based activities; it is concluded that individuals who demonstrate few such behaviours are simply not motivated to extend their interests in this area, or are limited from doing so for some other reason. Indeed, this idea appears to be supported by the association between offenders only using one Internet application and offenders spending limited hours on-line. Similarly, that these individuals were only found in possession of small amounts of objectionable material (as opposed to no objectionable material⁶⁹ or larger amounts of objectionable material) suggests a lack of investment in collection or production focused activities.

Offenders who primarily engaged in behaviours identified as indicative of constraints on Internet censorship involvement also demonstrated little propensity for on-line interaction with other offenders, other than that required to obtain objectionable material. Certainly, they were not noted as sharing stories or engaging in other ‘social niceties’ with other offenders. Given the relatively high likelihood that these offenders

⁶⁹ Possession of no objectionable material was excluded from analysis as it could indicate either a complete lack of collecting behaviour or deletion/hiding of collected material in a manner undetectable to CCU investigators.

chose IRC as their sole source of on-line access in relation to the acquisition of objectionable material, this lack of interaction appears noteworthy.

IRC is an easily accessible socially interactive application, albeit much less directed than ICQ or Email and much less dependent on mutual engagement. Given these offenders low involvement in offence related activities not necessary for the acquisition of objectionable material and low involvement in activities conducive to enhancing their ability to access objectionable material, it would appear that at least part of the they achieved through their on-line involvement in the trade of objectionable material was social. If this motivation is relevant to offenders who only use IRC, however, it is of particular interest that these individuals do not choose to use ICQ or IRC and do not appear to engage in regular on-line association with other known censorship offenders.

Implications

The SSA plot presented in Figure 3 shows all of the variables identified as indicative of involvement in on-line social connectivity⁷⁰ to the left of the vertical dividing line, alongside variables identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained involvement in offending and offence related behaviours⁷¹. Statistical associations and inter-item correlations between the variables identified as indicative of on-line social

⁷⁰ Use of Email or ICQ to access objectionable material and/or the formation of on-line relationships with known censorship offenders

⁷¹ Production of objectionable images, setting up websites and/or selling objectionable material, organisation of objectionable images, collection of other objectionable material, access to children and other individuals similar to the subject of objectionable material.

connectivity and those identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained offence and offence related activities⁷² support the associations portrayed in Figure 3.

Although these results appear to support the hypothesised relationship between on-line social connectivity and heightened involvement in censorship offending and associated activities, the nature of the dataset, precludes any conclusions about the direction of this relationship. It is therefore impossible to say definitively whether social connectivity encourages heightened offence involvement. Nevertheless, consideration of the case study data presented in this chapter provide some support for this hypothesis. These cases showed how direct interaction with on-line associates assisted offenders to develop computer skills specific to the trade of objectionable material, obtain large or specifically focused collections of objectionable material, and develop personal fantasies related to the content of this material. Indeed, they also demonstrated how some offenders actually went on-line to ‘meet’ with others for the purpose of sharing personal fantasies and/or sharing personally produced objectionable material. In these cases, the relationships themselves appeared to provide a form of reinforcement for some offence related activities. In turn, it is not difficult to see how this reinforcement might result in the development of an individual’s offence repertoire. Specifically, it is suggested that offenders who form on-line social relationships as a result of sharing their fantasies might be inspired to commit and record contact offences in order to acquire additional social capital to feed these relationships.

⁷² Including possession of in excess of 979 objectionable images and more than 30 hours spent on-line during the week prior to investigation.

Given the potential benefits and reinforcements associated with on-line social relationships, the results beg the question of why only some offenders engage in them, or make use of applications conducive to their development (eg. Email and ICQ). As discussed in the following section, this question appears particularly relevant to offenders who initiated on-line social contact but failed to form social connections as a result of this contact.

Socially Motivated Offenders Who Do Not Use ICQ or Email

Although the majority (99) of the Internet censorship offenders sampled in the current research neither used ICQ and/or Email to access objectionable material, nor demonstrated on-line ties to other Internet censorship offenders, most offenders (116) made use of IRC to access objectionable material. Furthermore, in the case of 55 offenders, IRC was the only Internet application used to access objectionable material. Email and ICQ enable social contact with others in the Internet environment, as does IRC. It may also be argued that Newsgroups also allow Internet based social contact through the posting of messages for other Internet censorship offenders, but unlike ICQ and IRC, communication using Newsgroups does not involve *real time* interaction and unlike Email and ICQ, Newsgroups may not be used to *direct* communication to a specific, 'known'⁷³ on-line associate.

As demonstrated in the case studies presented in this chapter, individuals who engage in regular on-line interaction with known censorship offenders may use Email, ICQ, or IRC to do so. However, the results suggest that IRC is rarely the only Internet

⁷³ The term 'known' refers to individuals who the offender is able to distinguish from others in the Internet environment on the basis of previous communication. This definition does not suggest that offenders could identify these individuals in the off-line environment, although the direct nature of ICQ and Email may indeed facilitate identification by law enforcement officers.

application used for this purpose. Furthermore although the results suggest a relationship between use of Internet applications that enable on-line social contact and relatively unconstrained involvement in Internet censorship offending and related activities, this relationship does not appear to exist when offenders only use IRC. Therefore, it appears to be the directed nature of contact facilitated via Email and ICQ that contributed to this type of involvement. It is suggested that this attribute of Email and ICQ use is of particular importance in the reinforcement of on-line activities because it requires mutual involvement for communication to continue.

As described by Taylor and Quayle (2003), much Internet based access to objectionable material is trade based. As such, offenders are encouraged to supply an objectionable image in order to receive one. In doing so, they implicate themselves as offenders. This process allows those involved in on-line activities pertaining to the content of objectionable material to assess the credibility of others in the Internet environment before sharing increased numbers of objectionable images and/or personally produced objectionable material with them. It allows them to determine whether the individual with whom they are interacting is a law enforcement officer as law enforcement officers are significantly limited in the types of material they are able to distribute on-line⁷⁴. Consequently, during involvement in open IRC chat rooms, Internet censorship offenders may offer objectionable images to others but limit further interaction with those who do not 'return the favour'. This process is commonly managed by using the IRC direct client to client (dcc) chat function to invite those who do return the favour to interact via more private forums (eg. ICQ, Email, or closed IRC chat rooms). Although conducive to enhanced security, these

⁷⁴ In New Zealand, law enforcement officers are not allowed to distribute any material that may be viewed as objectionable.

private forums limit the number of individuals with whom participants can trade and the number of images available to this end. In turn, they facilitate interdependence such that each trading partner must take active measures to acquire objectionable material to maintain the purpose for the relationships involved.

In order to obtain objectionable material for trading with other Internet censorship offenders, individuals may make use of Websites or Newsgroups, they may acquire it from sources other than the Internet and scan it into their computers, or they may personally produce the material themselves. The results of the analysis presented in this chapter reveal that offenders who only made use of IRC to access objectionable material were significantly unlikely to (or simply did not) demonstrate these behaviours. These results appear to indicate a relative lack of interest in the trade of objectionable material, and perhaps in objectionable material generally. Given this finding, these offenders' involvement in IRC groups facilitating access to objectionable material is noteworthy.

If the motives of offenders who only use IRC to access objectionable were purely focused on the social contact provided via this application, there are thousands of other on-line groups focused on much less risky activities than the trade of objectionable material that they could choose to become involved with (eg. movies, gardening, or even dating). However, if their motives were purely oriented towards the consumption of objectionable material, Newsgroups and websites would provide a much more anonymous access requiring much less involvement and effort.

The on-line activities (and lack thereof) of offenders who only use IRC to access objectionable material appear to suggest a combination of both social and instrumental needs but an unwillingness to commit to behaviours needed to achieve either in any meaningful way. This conclusion suggests that there may be some other factor mediating the influence of their on-line experience.

Off-line Constraints and On-line Activities

According to Sampson and Laub's (1993) Age Graded Theory of Social Control, individuals who perceive that their involvement in a specific relationship will provide them with increased access to social and economic capital will be motivated to invest an increasing amount of time and resources into developing that relationship. As they do so, the bonds between them are strengthened and as these bonds strengthen, so too is the influence that these other individuals are able to exert on their behaviour. At the same time, as bonds to individuals with a particular interest (such as the trade in objectionable material) increase, bonds to individuals with any competing interests (eg. law enforcement) must necessarily decrease, as must the social influence of these individuals. Within the context of relationships with individuals who are involved in criminal activities, these competing bonds are likely to have preventative value in terms of an individual's involvement in the activities concerned (Greenberg, 1999; Hirschi, 1969).

The Age Graded Theory of Social Control assumes that in order for new associations to weaken the bonds of existing associations, either the perceived value of the benefits received as a result of the new associations must significantly outweigh those of the existing associations or the bonds facilitating the existing associations must already be

significantly weakened. In terms of Internet censorship offenders, it is assumed that the interest that they demonstrate for the subject of objectionable material (such as the sexualisation of children) may contribute to weakening the bonds that these individuals have to others who may not accept or tolerate their interest. However, it is also reasonable to assume that if Internet censorship offenders are socially or financially dependent on bonds to individuals who do not accept their interest in objectionable material the opportunities facilitated through the establishment of new bonds with on-line associates may not be sufficient to weaken the limitations that the established bonds place on their time and their behaviour.

In line with these conclusions, it is suggested that individuals who only use IRC to access objectionable material via the Internet do not engage in activities conducive to developing their on-line relationships because the social and financial bonds that they have to members outside of the on-line community are sufficiently strong as to prevent involvement. Certainly, this conclusion is supported by the finding that users of IRC were more likely to be aged less than 25 years⁷⁵ and, therefore, more likely to depend on parental relationships for financial support⁷⁶.

⁷⁵ 61 (53.04 percent) of the 115 IRC users for whom age details were available were aged less than 25 years. $\chi^2(1, N=140) = 11.330, p=0.001$.

⁷⁶ It is acknowledged that the lack of involvement of individuals who only used IRC in some 'unconstrained' offence activities may be related to the young age of many of these individuals. For instance, school children are statistically less likely to have a history of prior physical and censorship offences than adults. However, given that the Jacard's coefficient used in the SSA analyses did not count the joint 'non-occurrence' of variables, such relationships unlikely to change the overall pattern of the SSA. Furthermore, as stated in earlier chapters, the distinction between constrained and unconstrained involvement in offence related activities was made on the basis of the cumulative sum of associated variables. Therefore, even if few young people were identified as previously offending, they could still be classed as demonstrating unconstrained behaviour if they collected large numbers of images, organised images, produced objectionable material, collected other objectionable material, collected non-objectionable material, had frequent, unsupervised access to potential subjects etc. In terms of the analyses undertaken in the current chapter, it is also of note that a prior history of criminal offending was associated with the collector, rather than the producer offender subtype.

The suggestion that individuals who only used IRC did not develop their offence behaviour because they feared losing this support is supported by the results of analyses involving the initial and on-going reactions of offenders to investigation by the CCU investigators (Table 13). These reactions varied significantly according to the type of Internet application/s that individual offenders used, with those who only used IRC being least likely to attempt to minimise the nature of the offence that they had committed. Similarly, offenders who only used one Internet application were also identified as significantly unlikely to attempt to minimise the severity of offending or to express shame in relation to their offence activities and significantly likely to freely admit their offending.

In contrast, users of Newsgroups were significantly likely to try to direct attention away from their offence activities, either by way of minimising the nature of these activities, refusing to answer questions about their offence activities or asking the CCU investigators to keep knowledge of these activities from their loved ones and non-involved associates. Users of Email and Websites were also significantly likely to request that their activities remain hidden from loved ones, and those who used Websites were significantly likely to refuse to answer questions about their offence activities. These findings suggest that offenders who only used IRC were not only more aware of the ramifications of their offence related activities (both legal and social) than offenders who used other applications, but also less likely to believe that they could avoid these ramifications.

Table 13: Statistically significant associations between reactions of offenders to CCU investigation and Internet applications used to access objectionable material

	Only used IRC (<i>N</i> = 56)		Users of only 1 Internet application (<i>N</i> = 68)		Newsgroup users (<i>N</i> = 46)		Email Users (<i>N</i> = 34)		Website Users (<i>N</i> = 50)	
	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i> : row/ column/ total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i>)	Sig.
Attempted to minimise the nature of the offence that they had committed (<i>N</i> = 40)	8 (40/55/141)	$p = 0.004$ ($\chi^2 = 8.479$) ^N	12 (40/68/141)	$p = 0.006$ ($\chi^2 = 7.430$) ^N	22 (40/46/141)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 12.720$)	12 (40/34/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	19 (40/50/141)	<i>n.s.</i>
Expressed shame in relation to their offence activities/asked that their offending behaviour be kept secret from their loved ones and non-involved associates (<i>N</i> = 20)	4 (20/55/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (20/68/141)	$p = 0.013$ ($\chi^2 = 6.178$) ^N (YCC)	13 (20/46/141)	$p = 0.002$ ($\chi^2 = 9.464$) (YCC)	9 (20/34/141)	$p = 0.025$ (FET)	14 (20/50/141)	$p = 0.001$ ($\chi^2 = 10.453$) (YCC)
Freely admitted their offending (<i>N</i> = 58)	28 (58/55/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	35 (58/68/141)	$p = 0.016$ ($\chi^2 = 5.795$)	8 (58/46/141)	$p = 0.000$ ($\chi^2 = 15.895$) ^N	12 (58/34/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (58/50/141)	$p = 0.007$ ($\chi^2 = 7.329$) ^N
Refused to answer questions about their offence activities (<i>N</i> = 22)	6 (22/55/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	8 (22/68/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	12 (22/46/141)	$p = 0.032$ ($\chi^2 = 4.578$) (YCC)	8 (22/34/141)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (22/50/141)	$P = 0.023$ ($\chi^2 = 5.195$) (YCC)

(YCC) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (FET) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N=Negative association

Summary

The results presented in the current chapter reveal an association between indicators of on-line social connectivity⁷⁷ and behaviours indicative of relatively unconstrained involvement in Internet censorship offence and offence related activities⁷⁸. In addition, case studies of the offence behaviour of Internet censorship offenders demonstrated the potential impact that reinforcement and assistance provided by other offenders during Internet censorship offence activities may have on defining the level or nature of future involvement. This impact ranged from the development of offence specific computer skills, through increased access to objectionable material, to the production of objectionable material specifically for the purpose of sharing fantasies and experiences with on-line associates. These findings support the hypothesised association between on-line social connectivity and heightened involvement in offence and offence related behaviours. Furthermore, the discovery that heightened involvement in offence and offence related behaviours was only associated with Internet applications that require offenders to mutually engage with each other conforms to Sampson and Laub's (1993) concept of relational interdependence. This concept is implicated in the Age Graded Theory of Social Control as the mechanism through which social influence facilitating criminal involvement is exerted.

These findings raise questions about why some offenders do not make use of Internet applications requiring mutual engagement (ICQ and Email) and/or form online social

⁷⁷ Use of Email or ICQ to access objectionable material and/or regular on-line interaction with other censorship offenders known to the CCU.

⁷⁸ eg. high hours spent on-line, large numbers of objectionable images, other objectionable material, involvement in producing objectionable material, well organised collections of objectionable images, legitimate access to children through voluntary activities, collection of non-objectionable material pertaining to children, convictions for physical offences.

ties to other censorship offenders. In particular, they beg the question of why offenders who made use of IRC in the absence of any other Internet applications did not engage in behaviours conducive to the formation of online social ties and/or more directed forms of social interaction. IRC is a socially facilitative application, albeit less directed than ICQ or Email. As such, choice of IRC to facilitate access to objectionable material suggests a desire for social interaction during the offence process. Certainly, if offenders were only interested in the material itself, the less socially facilitative website and newsgroup applications offer the potential for easier, more immediate access at least as greater number of objectionable images. Furthermore, website and newsgroup applications may be construed as 'safer' than IRC in that they appear much more anonymous to the user.

Given the ostensibly social motivation of offenders who use IRC to access objectionable material, it is curious that many such users do not appear to be motivated to make use of the apparently more socially gratifying ICQ and Email applications or engage in online relationships. In turn, it is suggested that these offenders lack of ICQ or Email use and lack of involvement in online relationships may result from influences in their off-line environments that prevent them from doing so. This possibility is further explored in the following chapter through examination of the types of individuals involved and the nature of their off-line relationships.

Chapter 6: The Relationship between Off-Line Influences and On-Line Behaviour

The results presented in Chapter Five suggest an association between on-line social connectivity⁷⁹ and increased involvement in offence and offence related behaviours⁸⁰. However, they also reveal that this association is limited to on-line social connections that are facilitated through the use of applications requiring directed, mutually reinforcing on-line interaction. Offenders who made sole use of Internet applications that were associated with on-line interaction during open forums (IRC) did not demonstrate the same level of involvement in Internet censorship behaviours as those who made use of applications facilitating more exclusive forms of interaction (Email or ICQ). Neither did they demonstrate on-line social ties to other known censorship offenders.

Given the various types of reinforcement found to be associated with directed, personal interaction during Internet censorship offence activities, these findings raise the question of why only a minority of offenders engage in this type of interaction. Of particular interest are the offenders who only used IRC to access objectionable material. Given that Newsgroups and Websites offer easier, more convenient and

⁷⁹ Use of Email or ICQ to access objectionable material and/or regular on-line interaction with other censorship offenders known to the CCU.

⁸⁰ eg. high hours spent on-line, large numbers of objectionable images, other objectionable material, involvement in producing objectionable material, well organised collections of objectionable images, legitimate access to children through voluntary activities, collection of non-objectionable material pertaining to children, convictions for physical offences.

anonymous access to this type of material, it is suggested that at least part of the reason these offenders selected IRC was social. Why then did these offenders not make use of ICQ and Email; applications which appear to be most conducive to social reinforcement?

Consideration of the time, energy and resources (eg. financial resources used to upgrade associated technology and develop on-line expertise) that offenders who only used IRC to access objectionable material from the Internet invested in their offence activities suggests a possible explanation for their subsequent lack of involvement in direct, two way on-line interaction and online relationships. In comparison to offenders who did engage in this type of interaction and/or who maintained online social relationships with other offenders, these individuals expended relatively little time, energy and resources into collecting, producing and/or storing objectionable material. Therefore, they possessed relatively fewer examples of objectionable material to offer online as 'tradable commodities'. As indicated in Chapter Two, the process of sharing objectionable material online has been identified as an important contributor to the development of trust between offenders. By offering objectionable material online, especially that which other offenders have identified it as desirable, an individual implicates him or herself as an offender and, as such, demonstrates his or her commitment to the overarching goal of the online community in which he or she wishes to become involved. In turn, it is suggested that offenders who do not possess sufficient objectionable material and/or who are unwilling to invest the time and energy necessary to seek out material for other offenders, are unlikely to be trusted by their online associates and unlikely to be invited to participate in more personal and, by definition, dangerous forms of online interaction. Given that the use

of Email or ICQ to access objectionable material requires a direct 'line' between the person receiving the material and the person sending the material; in the absence of such an invitation, use of ICQ and/or Email to access objectionable material is unfeasible.

As a result of the analyses undertaken in Chapter Five, it was concluded that individuals who only use IRC demonstrate an interest in using the Internet to gratify both social and instrumental needs pertaining to the content of the objectionable material traded via these forums, but do not appear to be willing to commit to the behaviours needed to achieve either in any meaningful way.

Age Graded Social Control and Limitations on Offence Related Activities

In order to explain the lack of engagement demonstrated by offenders whose on-line behaviour suggested social utility motives but ineffective use of the Internet medium as a means for accessing objectionable material and fostering on-line social relationships, it was suggested that these individuals may be subject to off-line influences that in some way prevent them from becoming more involved in the on-line trade of objectionable material. Sampson and Laub's (1993) Age Graded Theory of Social Control states that individuals will be motivated to invest an increasing amount of time and resources into a specific relationship if they perceive that their involvement in that relationship will provide them with increased access to social and economic capital. Consequently, these relationships become stronger and of greater influential value in terms of the individual's behaviours.

In terms of Internet based access to objectionable material, use of socially interactive applications during on-line involvement may result in the development of relationships that provide offenders with access to increasingly specific forms of objectionable material and with social support regarding their interest in the content of the material. In addition, the material that they obtain contributes to developing increased social status within the on-line community. As stated in Chapter Three, however, the Internet does not exist outside of the off-line world, it exists because of it. Most individuals, who engage in on-line relationships, also engage in off-line relationships, whether at home, within the context of their work or study activities, or in purely social situations. Where these relationships are perceived to provide greater benefits than those engaged in via the Internet, they are likely to be more influential in terms of individual decision making. Furthermore, given that most individuals with whom off-line relationships are maintained are unlikely to be accepting of the subject matter portrayed in objectionable material, their influence may prevent those who demonstrate an interest in such material from pursuing that interest. In line with the Theory of Age Graded Social Control, it is proposed that where individuals perceive their off-line relationships to provide them with greater social and economic capital than on-line relationships, they will invest increased time, energy and resources into these relationships and therefore, less into their on-line relationships. As a result, the likelihood that on-line relationships will be formed, and/or will become influential in terms of their behaviours, will be reduced.

The current chapter will explore the relationship between investment of resources into the Internet experience and the degree of autonomy implied by off-line home and work relationships. It is hypothesised that, regardless of the Internet application used,

individuals who depend on others within their home or work environment for their own social and financial security (such as those residing with parents or working in teams) will invest fewer resources in the on-line trade of objectionable material than those who do not (eg those who live alone or work alone)⁸¹.

Analysis Framework

Off-Line Environment and Relative Constraints on Offence Behaviour

The preceding chapter compared the relationship between variables identified as conceptually indicative of on-line social connectedness with those pertaining to constraints (or lack thereof) on involvement in Internet censorship offence and offence related activities. The current analysis will replace the variables identified as indicative of on-line connectedness with variables identified as indicative of off-line connectedness in an attempt to compare the relative associations between off-line connectedness and constraints on involvement in offence and offence related activities. The resources that offenders demonstrating different levels of off-line connectedness invest in on-line offence and offence related activities will be measured in terms of the lack of constraint they demonstrate in relation to these activities. Given the limitations of the current dataset in terms of being able to qualitatively measure the off-line connectedness of individual offenders, variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction within the home and work environment will be used as indicators of this concept. Table 14 provides a list of the variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line interaction that will be used in the current analysis. These variables are distinguished according to the degree to which they

⁸¹ This hypothesis was not explicitly advanced in Chapter Three of this thesis, but rather is the result of unforeseen findings resulting from the analyses presented in Chapter Five.

suggest dependence on immediate others for social or financial returns. Discussion of the rationale behind these distinctions follows Table 14.

Table 14: Work/home environment as an indicator of dependence for social or financial returns

<i>Work/home environment</i>	<i>Number of offenders</i>	<i>Likely dependency on associated relationships for social or financial returns</i>
Living with parents or grandparents	51	High
Living Alone	21	Low
Working in a team	48	High
Working alone	21	Low

Rationale for Distinctions Presented in Figure 6.1

Clearly, the lack of qualitative information provided in the current dataset means that the distinctions listed in Table 14 are not absolute. For instance, an individual may live with their parents or grandparents and be the main provider in the household. Accordingly, the delineations between these categories are relative. They pertain to the most likely scenario given the label attached. For instance, most (41) offenders who resided with their parents or grandparents were aged under 25 years⁸², and attending school or participating in tertiary education (33)⁸³. Those who were living with parents or grandparents but were not aged under 25 years were often receiving financial benefits from the arrangement⁸⁴. Therefore, it can be assumed that in the majority of these cases, residential relationships with parents (or grandparents) provided offenders with access to material support such as accommodation, food, and

⁸² 41 (80.39 percent) of the 51 offenders identified as living with parents or grandparents (out of the 141 offenders whose age and living arrangements were known) were aged less than 25 years [χ^2 (1, $N=141$) =34.491, $p=0.000$], including 34 who were aged less than 20 years [χ^2 (1, $N=141$) =60.759, $p=0.000$].

⁸³ 34 (68 percent) of the 50 offenders identified as involved in secondary or tertiary study (out of the 142 offenders whose employment and living arrangements were known) were living with parents or grandparents [χ^2 (1, $N=142$) =34.516, $p=0.000$]

⁸⁴ Four of the ten individuals who were older than 25 and were living with their parents or grandparents were not working and not studying (Fishers exact test, $p=0.010$, $N=141$), one was a student (not working), and in one case the offenders employment status was unknown.

even computers. In addition, although parents or grandparents may not have been these offenders' chosen source of social reinforcement, they were likely to be the people that the offenders had the most social contact with outside of the school/work environment. In the case of young offenders at least, they were also likely to have significant control over the offender's access to other social relationships. In contrast, the absence of any other social or financial influence in the home environments of offenders who resided alone demonstrates a complete lack of dependence from home based social or financial ties.

In terms of offenders' work environments, individuals who worked in teams (even if only a two person team) were perceived to be more likely than those who worked alone to depend on others in their work environment for social and/or financial returns. In comparison to offenders who worked alone, these offenders were more likely to have frequent regular contact with others in their immediate work environment. Furthermore, as administrators (7), labourers (3), farmhands (3), Information Technology (12), food preparation (4), retail (4) and educational (4) professionals, their work based performance (and in essence, their financial stability) was likely to be both influenced and measured by the effectiveness of their collaborations with others to achieve company and/or agency goals. In contrast to offenders who worked alone, offenders who worked in teams were also judged to be more likely to report to and/or be accountable to others in their work team. While offenders who worked alone may have had contact with clients and suppliers to their business⁸⁵, it is unlikely that this contact would have occurred as frequently, intensively or collaboratively as offenders who worked in teams, and any

⁸⁵ Offenders who worked alone were most commonly employed as independent 'information technology' (8) or 'trades' (4) professionals.

relationships formed as a result of this contact were judged less likely to result in ongoing association.

Other Off-line Relationships

In addition to offenders residing with parents or grandparents, residing alone, working in team environments or working alone, a number of other household and work circumstances were identified as salient in the current dataset. Most notably, these pertained to offenders residing with partners (35) and offenders being unemployed at the time of CCU detection (19). These variables were not considered in terms of the level of social and/or financial dependence associated with the relationships (or lack of relationships) that they pertained to as, in both cases, assessment was impeded by the relatively wide range of relationship types and levels of dependence associated with each. While many of the offenders who lived with partners may have received some financial (or in kind) assistance from partners, all but three⁸⁶ were also employed and therefore unlikely to be completely dependent on this assistance. Similarly, although the presence of a partner may actually imply greater levels of social interaction in the home environment than either living alone or living with parents; as offenders who lived with partners were mostly aged over 25 years (27)⁸⁷, and were not dependent on their partners for financial support, it is unlikely their partners had significant control over the time the offenders spent interacting with them. In turn, while a lack of involvement in any work environment may be seen to preclude dependence on work associates for social and/or financial returns⁸⁸ it does

⁸⁶ Of the 29 offenders for whom both the household and work status was known and who were identified as living with a partner.

⁸⁷ 27 of the 34 offenders identified as living with partners (out of the 141 offenders whose age and living arrangements were known) were aged 25 years and older [$\chi^2(1, N=141) = 11.119, p=0.001$].

⁸⁸ Most (14) offenders who were not working were receiving some form of government benefit (including eight who were receiving an unemployment benefit and six who were receiving a sickness benefit) and one was retired.

not preclude the formation of other relationships of significant social and financial value to those involved (eg. facilitating in-kind exchange to social and financial resources).

Although the ambiguous nature of the off-line relationships of offenders who lived with partners or were unemployed precluded classification in terms of the level of dependence implied by these off-line environments, it does not preclude comparison between these offenders involvement in offence and offence related activities and the level of involvement demonstrated by other offenders. Indeed, it may be argued that such comparison is useful precisely because of the ambiguity involved. It provides a control group allowing for the examination of variables not directly related to dependence that may have an impact of offence and offence related activities.

Presentation of Results

Analysis of the data pertaining to the off-line environments of Internet censorship offenders and indicators of relatively constrained or unconstrained offence behaviour will include initial consideration of each dataset using SSA analysis. Given the requirement that all variables entered into such an analysis be mutually independent, only one work related variable and one residential variable are included in each SSA plot.

Results

High Dependence Level

SSA analysis of the variables identified as indicative of constraints (or lack thereof) on Internet censorship offending and associated activities, incorporating the variables

pertaining to offenders living with parents (or grandparents) and working in a team environment, yielded a two dimensional solution resulting in a coefficient of alienation of 0.176070, after 20 iterations. This solution is plotted in Figure 5. As indicated by the vertical line drawn through the centre right of Figure 5, the points represented on the SSA plot may be divided into two distinct regions. These are labelled 'Region 1' and 'Region 2'.

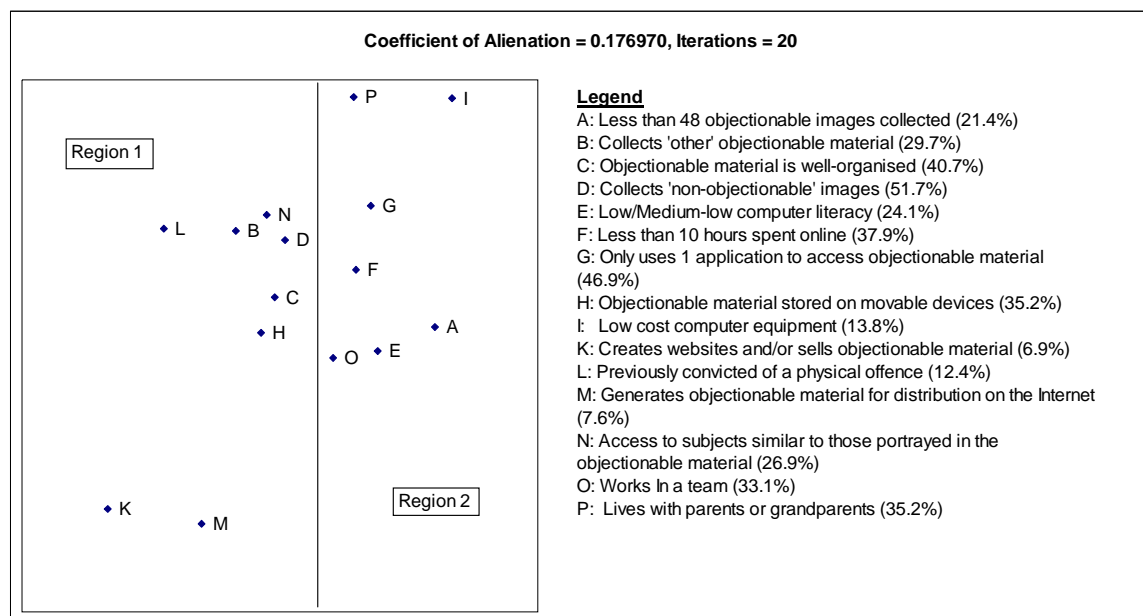


Figure 5: Two dimensional SSA plot showing variables identified as indicative of constraints (or lack thereof) on involvement in Internet censorship offending and of offenders' social or financial dependence on relationships within their home or work environment

As shown in Figure 5, the point pertaining to offenders living with parents or grandparents (labelled P) is located in the upper right hand side of the SSA plot, relatively close to the point pertaining to offenders using low cost computer equipment to access objectionable material from the Internet⁸⁹ and in the same general

⁸⁹ It is noted that, in Figure 5, the close proximity of the point pertaining to offenders living with parents or grandparents and the point pertaining to low cost computer equipment might result less from low offender investment in offence activities than from limits on financial control/access in relation to equipment. However, low investment in offence activity was not only indicated by low cost investment but also use of only 1 Internet application, low time investment, collection of few images and lack of involvement in behaviours indicative of high investment. The apparent association between offenders living with parents or grandparents and having low cost computer equipment does not explain why these individuals only chose to make use of one Internet application to access objectionable material. Neither does it explain why these individuals did not engage in non-Internet based activities indicative

region (Region 2) as other points pertaining to variables indicative of low offender investment in censorship offending⁹⁰. The point pertaining to offenders working in a team environment (labelled O) also appeared to be more closely aligned with Region 2 of Figure 5 than with the region pertaining to offenders demonstrating relatively unconstrained offence related activities⁹¹. As such, the associations presented in Figure 5 appear to suggest that individuals whose off-line relationships imply social or financial dependence on others demonstrate reduced investment of time and resources in censorship offence related activities.

In contrast to the relationships suggested by the SSA solution presented in Figure 5, analysis of the inter-item correlations between the variable pertaining to offenders living with parents or grandparents and the five activities variables⁹² located in Region 2 of Figure 5 yielded a KR20 Alpha of 0.4287⁹³. Similarly, the KR20 Alpha for the inter-item correlation between the variable pertaining to offenders working in a team and the five activities variables plotted in Region 2 of Figure 5 was only

of high investment (e.g. accessing other forms of objectionable material, accessing subjects, producing material, collecting non-objectionable material). Furthermore, given the young age of many of the offenders who resided with parents or grandparents, it is likely that these individuals were actually more skilled in computer use than older counterparts. In turn, this skill may have counterbalanced any other limitations they were subject to.

The association between low cost computer equipment and living with parents is not automatic as many parents' may be able to afford higher cost equipment than are offenders in other groups (e.g. the unemployed). Similarly, while it might be argued that young offenders who live with parents have less control over their time than other offenders, it may also be argued that school children have more holidays and potentially more unsupervised free time than other offenders. Indeed, as will be shown in the remainder of this chapter, the associations shown in Figure 5 appear to result less from these individuals having low cost equipment as from these individuals failing to engage in any other behaviours indicative of high offence investment.

⁹⁰ eg. less than 10 hours spent on-line during the week prior to investigation, low/medium low level of computer literacy, in possession of less than 48 objectionable images, only one Internet application used to access objectionable material.

⁹¹ Such as collecting behaviours, production behaviours and other behaviours associated with but not necessary for censorship offending to occur.

⁹² Less than 10 hours spent on-line during the week prior to investigation, low/medium low level of computer literacy, in possession of less than 48 objectionable images, low cost computer equipment, only one Internet application used to access objectionable material.

⁹³ This analysis only considered the results of the 142 offenders about whom details regarding household composition were provided on the CCU checklist.

0.5028⁹⁴. These coefficients suggest a very low level of consistency between the variables pertaining to offenders living with parents or grandparents or working in team environments and other items plotted in Region 2 of Figure 5. In addition, further chi square analysis revealed no significant associations between offenders residing with their parents or grandparents and limitations on the number of applications or hours they dedicated to accessing objectionable material. In terms of offenders working in teams, the only positive association identified concerned the use of only one Internet application to access objectionable material from the Internet. Of the 42 offenders who were only identified as using one Internet application to access objectionable material, 25 (59.52 percent) were identified as working in teams [χ^2 (1, N=102) = 5.195, p=0.023]⁹⁵.

The findings presented above suggest that, in Figure 5, the distribution of the points pertaining to offenders living with parents (or grandparents) and working in teams may result more from the distinction between these variables and variables suggestive of unconstrained offence and offence related activities, than any inherent associations between these variables and variables suggestive of constrained offence and offence related activities. In line with this conclusion, chi square analysis revealed significant negative associations between offenders working in teams and offenders (Table 15):

- using two or more Internet applications to access objectionable material,
- spending more than 30 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation, and
- having been convicted of a physical offence.

⁹⁴ This analysis only considered the results of the 105 offenders about whom details regarding work environment were provided on the CCU checklist.

⁹⁵ In only 102 cases was the nature of the work environment, and the type of Internet application used, known.

Similarly, offenders who resided with parents of grandparents were identified as significantly unlikely to:

- be found in possession of objectionable material other than images accessed via the computer,
- possess well organised collections of objectionable material,
- maintain access to individuals similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material they selected, and
- be identified as creating websites and/or sell objectionable material.

Table 15: Statistically significant associations for offenders working in teams and living with parents/grandparents

	Works in a team environment (<i>N</i> = 48)		Lives with parents or grandparents (<i>N</i> = 51)	
	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i>)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid <i>N</i>)	Sig.
Use of more than one Internet applications to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 60)	20 (55/47/102)	<i>p</i> = 0.033 ($\chi^2 = 4.534$) _{<i>N</i>}	17 (59/50/138)	n.s.
Used more than two Internet applications to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 41)	9 (37/47/102)	<i>p</i> = 0.001 ($\chi^2 = 11.059$) _{<i>N</i>}	14 (41/50/138)	n.s.
Spent more than 30 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation by the CCU (<i>N</i> = 21)	3 (19/48/95)	<i>p</i> = 0.009 ($\chi^2 = 8.327$) _{<i>N</i>}	6 (21/40/121)	n.s.
Has previously been convicted of a physical offence (<i>N</i> = 18)	3 (18/48/105)	<i>P</i> = 0.038 ($\chi^2 = 4.323$) _{<i>N</i>}	2 (17/51/142)	n.s.
Possesses objectionable material obtained from sources other than the Internet (<i>N</i> = 43)	13 (43/48/105)	n.s.	10 (43/51/141)	<i>p</i> = 0.038 ($\chi^2 = 4.295$) _{<i>N</i>}
Uses identifiable system to organise objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 59)	22 (59/48/105)	n.s.	15 (59/51/142)	<i>p</i> = 0.028 ($\chi^2 = 4.828$) _{<i>N</i>}
Has access to children and other potential subjects through work, home or voluntary activities (<i>N</i> = 39)	15 (25/48/105)	n.s.	6 (39/51/142)	<i>p</i> = 0.002 ($\chi^2 = 9.847$) _{<i>N</i>}
Has set up websites and/or sold objectionable material (<i>N</i> =10)	2 (10/48/105)	n.s.	0 (10/51/142)	<i>p</i> = 0.014 (<i>FET</i>) _{<i>N</i>}

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, n.s. = not statistically significant, _{*N*} = Negative Association

These findings support the hypothesis that individuals who depend on relationships in their work or home environment for social and/or financial security tend to limit their involvement in activities associated with Internet censorship offending. However, the results also imply differences in terms of the way these limitations are imposed. Specifically, individuals who depend on work based relationships for social and/or financial security tend to limit the investment that they make in terms of time and energy given to on-line activities. In turn, those who depend on home based relationships social and/or financial security appear to clearly delineate between on

and off-line activities, with no specific limitations imposed on on-line activities per se, except that they are not highly targeted and do not carry over into off-line time.

Low Dependence Level

Figure 6 plots the first two vectors of the three⁹⁶ dimensional solution for an SSA analysis of the variables identified as indicative of the constraints or lack of constraints on Internet censorship offending and associated activities. This analysis incorporates the variables pertaining to offenders living alone and working alone. This analysis yielded a two dimensional solution resulting in a coefficient of alienation of 0.120830 after 17 iterations. As indicated by the vertical line drawn through the centre right of Figure 6, the points represented on the SSA plot may be divided into two distinct regions. These are labelled ‘Region 1’ and ‘Region 2’.

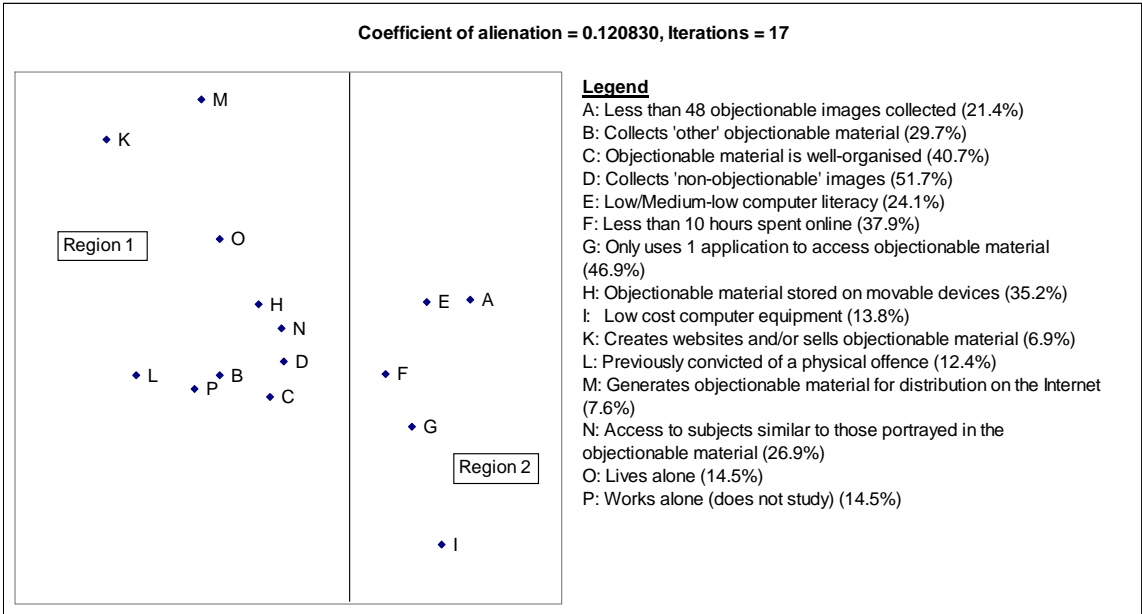


Figure 6: Two dimensional SSA plot showing variables identified as indicative of constraints (or lack thereof) on involvement in Internet censorship offending and of offenders' social or financial independence of relationships within their home or work environment

⁹⁶ As the two dimensional solution yielded a coefficient of alienation in excess of 0.2 (0.202430) the first two vectors of the three dimensional solution are presented.

As shown in Figure 6, the point pertaining to offenders living alone (labelled O) is located to the left of the vertical line dividing the two regions of the plot, as is the point pertaining to offenders working alone (labelled P). This region of the plot (Region 1) also accommodated the points suggestive of few constraints on offence behaviour⁹⁷. Perhaps more notably, in terms of the hypothesised association between offender autonomy and investment of time, energy and financial resources into censorship offence related activities, the points pertaining to offenders living alone and offenders being employed in isolated conditions were clearly distanced from those suggestive of relatively constrained offence behaviour⁹⁸.

The distribution of the variables presented in Figure 6 suggest that individuals who reside alone are more likely than those who reside with parents or grandparents to demonstrate behaviours indicative of relatively unconstrained censorship offending and involvement in associated activities. Similarly, these associations also indicate that individuals who work alone are more likely than those who work in teams to demonstrate this pattern of offence behaviour and involvement in associated activities. These findings appear to support the hypothesis that offenders who receive few (if any) social or financial returns from home and/or work based relationships are likely to invest more time and energy in on-line activities, and associated behaviours, than those who rely on home or work based relationships for social or financial returns.

⁹⁷ eg well organised collections of objectionable material, storing objectionable material using movable devices, having been convicted of a physical offence, and creating websites and/or selling objectionable material.

⁹⁸ eg. only being found in possession of small numbers of objectionable images, only using one Internet application to access objectionable material, spending less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation, possessing computer equipment of low resale value, possessing less than 48 objectionable images, and demonstrating low or medium low levels of computer literacy.

Analysis of inter-item correlations between the variable pertaining to offenders living alone and the variables represented in Region 1 of Figure 6 that pertain to offence activities and associated behaviours yielded a KR20 alpha coefficient of 0.6379⁹⁹. In turn, inter-item correlation between the variable pertaining to offenders working in isolated conditions and the variables represented in Region 1 of Figure 6 that pertain to offence activities and associated behaviours yielded a KR20 coefficient of 0.6381¹⁰⁰. These coefficients imply consistency between variables pertaining to offenders living alone and/or working alone and variables identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained offence behaviour and involvement in associated activities. In turn, they appear to provide support for the associations presented in Figure 6.

Other Off-line Influences

Analysis of the dataset incorporating the variables pertaining to offenders living with partners and offenders not being employed¹⁰¹ at the time of detection by the CCU yielded a two dimensional solution resulting in a coefficient of alienation of 0.181740, after 14 iterations. This solution is plotted in Figure 7. As indicated by the vertical line drawn in the centre of Figure 7, the points represented on the SSA plot may be divided into two distinct regions. These are labelled 'Region 1' and 'Region 2'.

⁹⁹ This analysis only considered the results of the 142 offenders about whom details regarding household composition were provided on the CCU checklist.

¹⁰⁰ This analysis only considered the results of the 105 offenders about whom details regarding work environment were provided on the CCU checklist.

¹⁰¹ Including offenders who were receiving sickness benefits, offenders who were receiving unemployment benefits, and offenders who were retired.

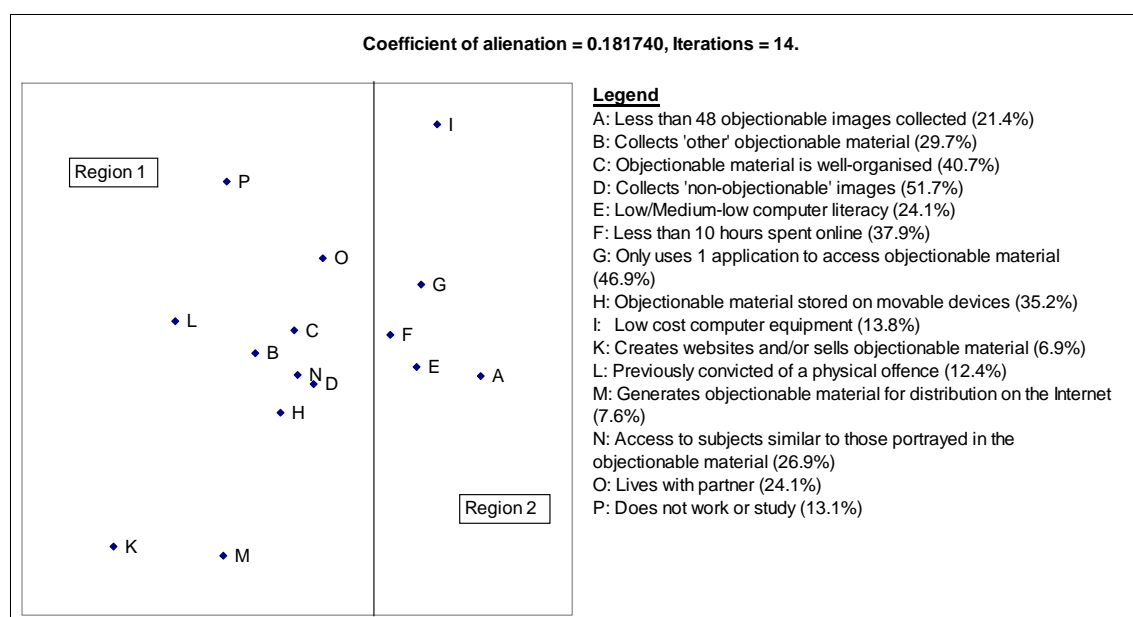


Figure 7: Two dimensional SSA plot showing variables identified as indicative of constraints (or lack thereof) on involvement in Internet censorship offending and 'other' influences in offenders' home or work environments

In Figure 7, the point pertaining to offenders living with partners (labelled O) is located to the left of the central dividing line in the same region of the plot as points pertaining to variables identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained offence behaviour and involvement in associated activities (Region 1). Similarly, the point pertaining to offenders who do not work is located in the same region of the SSA plot presented in Figure 7. Although these points are relatively distant from the majority of the variables distributed in Region 1 of Figure 7, on the whole, the distance between them and the points pertaining to constraints on offence behaviour¹⁰² is greater. In turn, the results of the SSA analysis appears to suggest an association between offenders living with partners and/or not working and relatively unconstrained offence behaviour; albeit, to a lesser degree than that demonstrated by offenders who lived or worked alone. In line with this conclusion, inter-item correlation between the variable

¹⁰² eg. only being found in possession of small numbers of objectionable images, only using one Internet application to access objectionable material, spending less than 10 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation, possessing computer equipment of low resale value, possessing less than 48 objectionable images, and demonstrating low or medium low levels of computer literacy.

pertaining to offenders living with partners and the behavioural variables represented in Region 1 yielded a KR20 coefficient of 0.6155¹⁰³. In turn, inter-item correlation between the variable pertaining to offenders not working and the behavioural variables represented in Region 1 yielded a KR20 coefficient of 0.6343¹⁰⁴. Although indicative of consistency between variables pertaining to offenders living with partners and/or being unemployed and variables identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained offence behaviour and involvement in associated activities, both of these coefficients are less than the coefficients achieved when considering the inter-item correlation between variables pertaining to offenders living alone and/or working alone.

Relative Constraints and Off-Line Environments of Individual Offenders

In order to assess the degree to which the associations identified between off-line home and work relationships and patterns of offence and offence related behaviour may be used to predict the behaviour of individual offenders; each offender in the current sample was classified according to whether his or her offence behaviours were more suggestive of constrained or unconstrained behaviour (as associated with the variables represented in Regions 1 and 2 of Figures 5 through 7) and these classifications were compared to the off-line relationships recorded on their CCU checklists (see Chapter Five for further details of the classification procedure). This comparison revealed a positive association between offenders residing with parents or grandparents and primarily demonstrating constrained offence and offence related

¹⁰³ This analysis only considered the results of the 142 offenders about whom details regarding household composition were provided on the CCU checklist.

¹⁰⁴ This analysis only considered the results of the 105 offenders about whom details regarding work environment were provided on the CCU checklist.

behaviours¹⁰⁵. However, no other significant associations were identified between offenders' off-line relationships and constraints (or lack thereof) on offence and offence related behaviour.

Implications

The results presented in Chapter Five demonstrate an association between indicators of on-line social connectivity (eg. use of ICQ or Email to access objectionable material and/or on-line interactions with other known censorship offenders) and relatively unconstrained involvement in Internet censorship offence related activities. These results also demonstrate that indicators of on-line social connectivity may be used to predict the level of an individual offender's involvement in Internet censorship offence related activities. Furthermore, given the various forms of assistance and reinforcement for Internet censorship offending that may result from on-line social interaction during the offence process, the data presented in Chapter Five suggest the potential for these social connections to facilitate the further development of individual offence repertoire. Specifically, it is noted that offenders who seek and obtain social reinforcement from sharing fantasies/experiences relating to the content of objectionable material and/or personally produced examples of objectionable material may be motivated to increase their experiences and/or production activities for this purpose.

The results presented in the current chapter show that indicators of social and financial dependence on relationships within an offender's home environment may be used to predict constraints on that offender's involvement in Internet censorship

¹⁰⁵ Only 18 of the 68 offenders identified as demonstrating relatively unconstrained offence behaviours (whose living arrangements were known) were also identified as residing with parents or grandparents [$\chi^2 (1, N=141) = 4.639, p=0.031$]

offence related activities. Specifically, offenders who lived with parents or grandparents, most of whom were aged less than 25 years and/or not employed, were found to be significantly unlikely to demonstrate significant involvement in the collection or distribution of objectionable material. This finding provides support for the hypothesis that, due to the limitations that involvement in associated relationships puts on the time, energy and resources available to offenders, those who are dependent on others in their off-line environment may be less able to invest time, energy and resources in on-line relationships than those who demonstrate relative off-line independence. Despite this result, however, off-line indicators of social and financial dependence on work related relationships were not found to be statistically predictive of constraints on offence behaviour and off-line indicators of social and financial independence were not found to be statistically predictive of unconstrained offence activity. Indeed, the potential use of social and financial independence as a predictive variable appears to be undermined by the association between indicators of unconstrained involvement in Internet censorship offence related activities and off-line relationships that demonstrate ambiguity in terms of the degree of independence implied. Offenders who demonstrated interdependence in their off-line relationships (eg. those who lived with partners), and those who demonstrate dependence on government (eg. unemployment beneficiaries) rather than interpersonal associates, were almost as likely to demonstrate unconstrained offence activities as those who demonstrated off-line independence (eg. lived and/or worked alone).

The findings regarding offenders who were unemployed and/or who lived with partners are noteworthy. Although it may be argued that unemployed individuals are financially dependant on government, the direct influence that government officials

have on how they spend their time is likely to be relatively low. Therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that these offenders' behaviour reflects that of offenders classified as socially and/or financially independent. In the case of offenders who live with partners, however, it seems unlikely that their willingness, ability and capacity to engage in offence behaviours (including available time and resources) would be completely uninfluenced by and independent of their 'significant others'. In some ways the off-line environments of these offenders may be more easily likened to the off-line environments of offenders who live with parents or grandparents or work in teams than the off-line environments of offenders who live or work alone. Therefore, it seems surprising that their offence behaviours are more like the offence behaviour of members of the latter off-line groupings. Nevertheless, given that most of these offenders were employed and, as such, at least partly financially independent of their partners, it is unlikely that their reliance on the financial security provided by home and work based relationships was as great as that of offenders who lived with parents or grandparents or worked in teams. Furthermore, given that partner based relationships tend to be less structured and regulated than work based relationships or parent-child relationships, it is likely that offenders who lived with partners experienced greater freedom of time and resource use in their home environment¹⁰⁶ than offenders who lived with parents. It is also likely that these offenders experienced greater freedom of time and resource use in their home environment than that experienced in the work environment by offenders who worked in teams.

The results presented thus far suggest that, in the absence of off-line indicators of social and financial dependence on known associates, offenders will engage in

¹⁰⁶ Given traditional household gender roles, it should also be noted that all but one of these offenders were men and therefore they may have been even less likely to have demands placed on them in their home relationships.

Internet censorship offence behaviours conducive to the development of on-line social connections with other offenders. In turn, social reinforcement and assistance provided on-line by other offenders may act to encourage future involvement in the offence process, and/or future development of an individual's offence repertoire. Indeed, as demonstrated in the case studies presented in Chapter Five, activities aimed at facilitating social interaction may come to dominate some of these offender's on-line behaviours.

Although this conclusion does appear to fit the data, it does not account for the seven offenders who lived alone and only chose to use IRC or the three offenders who were living alone yet only chose to use Newsgroups and/or websites to access objectionable material. Perhaps most notably, it fails to account for the relative lack of association between offenders living alone and regularly engaging in interaction with other known censorship offenders. Indeed, only four of the 21 offenders who were identified as living alone demonstrated on-line social ties to others involved in Internet censorship offending. This finding may explain the lack of a predictive association between offenders living alone and demonstrating relatively unconstrained Internet offence behaviours. However, it fails to explain why these offenders do not engage in on-line of relationships.

Given that the results presented in Chapter Five suggest that failure to engage in directed, mutually reinforcing on-line interaction may reduce the likelihood that offenders will be encouraged to develop their offence repertoire, understanding why a minority of offenders who live in isolated conditions do not choose to engage in this type of interaction at any level may be of importance in predicting offence behaviour

over the lifespan. Most offenders who demonstrated constraints on their offence behaviour and on-line social connectivity were residing with parents or grandparents and aged less than 25 years and/or unemployed. It is likely that the majority of these will eventually gain employment and move away from their parents and grandparents and the limiting influence of these relationships will decline. Given their apparent interest in objectionable material, knowing which of them may be motivated to form on-line associations once they have done so may provide clues to the nature of their future offence behaviour, and indicators of how to prevent such behaviour.

In Chapter Three, Canters (1994, 1995) concept of Interpersonal coherence was discussed as a possible explanation of the social behaviour, or lack thereof, of individuals during the commission of a criminal offence. This concept specifies consistency in an individual's social behaviour between offence and non-offence activities. In line with this concept, it is hypothesised that individuals who use social relationships to achieve gratifications in their off-line environment will be most likely to seek out social relationships as a means of achieving gratifications in the on-line environment, and during offences committed within this environment. The following chapter will explore this hypothesis further.

Summary

The results support the hypothesis that Internet censorship offenders who are more likely to be socially or financially dependent on others in their off-line environment (especially home) are less likely to invest time, energy and resources in on-line offence related activities. These offenders are unlikely to be involved in the production of objectionable material, unlikely to store objectionable material using

movable devices, and unlikely to possess large numbers of objectionable images. Given that the formation of on-line relationships appears to be contingent on the sharing of objectionable material between offenders, the fact that these individuals possess few examples of this type of material may limit their ability to form these relationships. In turn, they are unlikely to be influenced by social reinforcement occurring within these relationships. This reinforcement has been shown to impact on the future development of offence activities, especially those related to the production of objectionable material.

The findings presented in this chapter appear to explain why some offenders do not form social connections during their on-line activities. However, they do not account for all offenders who fail to engage in directed, two way interactions during the process of Internet censorship offending. Specifically, they do not explain why few of the offenders who lived alone and/or worked alone, and were therefore unlikely to be dependent on social relationships in their home or work environments, were found to demonstrate on-line social connections. The following chapter will explore this issue further.

Chapter 7: The Relationship between Off-Line Influences and On-Line Social Connectivity

The results presented in Chapter Five suggest that Internet censorship offenders who engage in direct, personal, interaction with others during their involvement in Internet censorship offence activities will be more likely to demonstrate relatively unconstrained patterns of offending (and associated involvement with the content of objectionable material) than those who do not. As demonstrated through case studies of individual offence behaviour, within the Internet environment, directed, two way interaction regarding the content of objectionable material may provide offenders with significant social reinforcement for their involvement in Internet censorship offending. However, given the 'trade' based nature of on-line interactions regarding the content of objectionable material (Taylor and Quayle, 2003), direct involvement at an interpersonal level is likely to be contingent on offenders being able to offer previously acquired objectionable material to those with whom they wish to interact. In turn, offenders who seek to form on-line relationships must invest time and energy into the collection and/or production of objectionable material. They must also be willing and able to store that material until they are able to make contact with others in the on-line environment and, once contact is made, to make it available to others. Individuals who simply consume objectionable material during on-line activities are unlikely to meet these requirements.

The results of the Chapter Six suggest that for some offender's, the off-line environments in which they live and/or work may prevent them from being able to invest time and energy into collecting and/or producing objectionable material, and/or may reduce their willingness to store and offer objectionable material on-line. Individuals who reside in environments where they are dependent on others for their social and financial security may not wish to engage in these activities as they fear the impact that their detection may have on their off-line relationships. Alternatively, the level of control implied by these off-line relationships may limit the amount of time or energy that they have to invest in the collection or production of objectionable material, or the resources that they are able to use to store or offer objectionable material on-line.

Nevertheless, these results do not explain why, in the absence of indicators of off-line dependence, some offenders still do not choose to engage in mutual interaction with others during their involvement in Internet censorship offence activities. Most offenders who were identified as residing in environments where they are dependent on others for their social and financial security were aged less than 25 years and lived with parents or grandparents. Given the high likelihood that many of these individuals would leave these environments once they became employed or entered into adult partnerships, this question is of potential importance in terms of predicting and preventing the development of offence behaviours across an individual's lifetime. The current chapter will attempt to identify variables related to offender's choices to engage in direct, personal, interaction with others during their involvement in Internet censorship offence activities.

As described in Chapter Three of this thesis, Canter's (1995) concept of Interpersonal Coherence suggests that during the commission of a crime, offenders will tend to deal with victims and witnesses in a similar manner as they deal with other people in their day-to-day lives. In line with this conceptualisation, hypothesis (ii) of this thesis proposes that the type of social transactions that Internet censorship offenders engage in during the process of obtaining or distributing objectionable material will mirror the type of social transactions that they regularly engage in during off-line activity. Specifically, offenders will tend towards online interaction similar to that which they are most comfortable and experienced in off-line.

It follows from this hypothesis, that offenders who reside or work in environments conducive to group based interaction (such as working in teams of more than two people, living with a number of flatmates, living with parents and siblings, or participating in secondary school education) should be more likely to use Internet applications facilitating on-line group based interaction (such as IRC). On the other hand, those whose home or work environments suggest a greater emphasis on one on one interpersonal interaction (such as individuals who live with partners or work in dyads) should demonstrate a greater inclination to use more personal, socially interactive applications (such as email and ICQ). In turn, it is to be expected that individuals who do not reside or work in environments conducive to any type of interaction (such as those who work alone and those who live alone), or who are likely to be subject to social isolation as a result of their status as 'unemployed' (see Bartley, 1994; Fryer, 1988; Gallie, 2000), would demonstrate a preference for the least socially interactive applications (such as Websites and Newsgroups). Given the direct nature of the communication implied by regular interaction with other known

Internet censorship offenders, it is also suggested that individuals who engage in this activity will be more familiar with directed, two way interactions in their off-line environments.

Analysis Framework

In order to assess whether the way in which offenders interact on-line is comparable to the types of interactions in which they regularly engage off-line, variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line interaction in each offenders home and work environment are compared to variables pertaining to opportunities for on-line interaction (or lack thereof). Opportunities for on-line interaction will be measured in terms of the level of social ‘intimacy’ associated with the applications that offenders used to access objectionable material via the Internet. Table 16 provides details of these applications and the most ‘intimate’ levels of social interaction associated with each (during the period that the sample was collected)¹⁰⁷. In addition, cases in which offenders were identified as engaging in direct, personal relationships with other censorship offenders known to the CCU investigations (N=25) will be used as an indicators of direct, personal on-line interaction.

¹⁰⁷ It is acknowledged that in some cases the development of the applications has changed the nature of social interaction associated with each application since the sample was collected. Table 6.3 attempts to classify applications according to most likely reason for choice at the time the choice was made.

Table 16: Most 'intimate' level of on-line social interaction associated with the Internet applications used by Internet censorship offenders

<i>Internet application/s</i>	<i>Number of offenders in the current sample (Internet application/s used to offend is known N=141)</i>	<i>Most intimate level of social interaction facilitated by the Internet application</i>
Email	34	Directed, two way social interaction
ICQ	21	Immediate, directed, two way social interaction
Internet Relay Chat (IRC)	116	Immediate group based social interaction
Newsgroups	50	No social interaction/Indirect social interaction
Websites	46	No social interaction

In turn, Table 17 provides a list of the variables identified as indicative of opportunities for off-line interaction that will be used in the current analyses. These variables are also distinguished according to the type and 'intimacy' of social interaction most likely to occur within the context of the relationships identified.

Table 17: Most 'intimate' level of off-line social interaction associated with the home and work environment of individual Internet censorship offenders

<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Number of offenders in the current sample (work environment known, N=105; household composition known, N=142)</i>	<i>Most intimate type of social interaction associated with relationships involved</i>
Living with a partner	35	Directed, two way social interaction
Living with parents or grandparents	51	Group based social interaction
Working in a team	48	Group based social interaction
Living Alone	21	Little or no social interaction
Working alone	21	Little or no social interaction
Not working	19	Little or no social interaction

As in the preceding analysis, the lack of qualitative information provided in the current dataset in relation to these variables means that the distinctions presented in Table 17 are not absolute. An individual may work alone, but their professional activities may involve them in regular group activities (eg. an organisational psychologist). Accordingly, the delineations between these categories are relative. They pertain to the most likely scenario given the label attached. For instance, most of the current sample of Internet censorship offenders who worked alone were employed in sole trading technical, trade or retail activities, including a substantial proportion of website designers and computer technicians (see Appendix F).

Results

Table 18 shows the statistically significant results of Chi square analyses undertaken to test for associations between variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction in each offenders work environment and variables pertaining to offender involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material. In turn, Table 19 shows the statistically significant results of Chi square analyses undertaken to test for associations between variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction in each offender's home environment and variables pertaining to offender involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material. These results are discussed in terms of the type of on-line interaction demonstrated by offenders.

Table 18: Statistically significant associations between variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction in each offenders work environment and variables pertaining to offender involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material

	Works in teams (<i>N</i> = 48)		Works alone (<i>N</i> = 38)		Does not work (<i>N</i> = 19)	
	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.
Regular interaction with other known censorship offenders during on-line activities (<i>N</i> = 25)	10 (25/48/145)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (25/38/145)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (19/25/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of IRC to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 116)	37 (81/47/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	31 (81/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (81/19/102)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of FTP to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 14)	3 (6/47/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	2 (6/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	1 (6/19/102)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Email to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 34)	10 (31/47/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (31/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	8 (31/19/102)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of ICQ to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 21)	8 (21/47/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	9 (21/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (21/19/102)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Email and ICQ to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 9)	2 (9/47/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (9/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (9/19/102)	<i>n.s.</i>
Only uses IRC, ICQ and/or Email to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 81)	29 (48/47/102)	$p = 0.006 (\chi^2 = 7.502)$	13 (48/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	6 (48/19/102)	
Use of Websites to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 50)	16 (46/47/102)	$p = 0.042 (\chi^2 = 4.303)^N$	20 (46/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	10 (46/19/102)	
Use of Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 46)	13 (41/47/102)	$p = 0.017 (\chi^2 = 5.699)^N$	16 (41/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	12 (41/19/145)	$p = 0.045 (\chi^2 = 4.015) (YCC)$

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N = Negative association

Table 18 (continued): Statistically significant associations between variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction in each offenders work environment and variables pertaining to offender involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material

	Works in teams (<i>N</i> = 48)		Works alone (<i>N</i> = 38)		Does not work (<i>N</i> = 19)	
	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.
Use of Websites and Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 36)	10 (32/47/102)	$p = 0.038$ ($\chi^2 = 4.127$) ^N	14 (32/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	8 (32/19/102)	<i>n.s.</i>
Only uses Websites and/or Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 14)	5 (12/47/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (12/36/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (12/19/102)	

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N = Negative association

Table 19: Statistically significant associations between variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction in each offenders home environment and variables pertaining to offender involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material

	Lives with parents or grandparents (<i>N</i> = 51)		Lives with partner (<i>N</i> = 35)		Lives with any other adults (<i>N</i> = 113)		Lives alone (<i>N</i> = 21)	
	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.
Regular interaction with other known censorship offenders during on-line activities (<i>N</i> = 25)	5 (25/51/142)	<i>n.s.</i>	11 (25/35/142)	$p = 0.027 (\chi^2 = 4.919), (YCC)$	17 (25/113/142)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (25/21/142)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of IRC to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 116)	43 (114/50/138))	<i>n.s.</i>	27 (114/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	94 (114/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	14 (114/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of FTP to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 14)	9 (9/50/138))	$p = 0.014 (FET)$	3 (9/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (9/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	0 (9/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Email to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 34)	7 (34/50/138)	$p = 0.029 (\chi^2 = 4.779)^N$	12 (34/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	24 (34/109/138)		7 (34/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of ICQ to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 21)	4 (20/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	8 (20/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (20/109/138)		4 (20/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Email and ICQ to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 9)	1 (9/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	5 (9/33/138)	$p = 0.036 (FET)$	6 (9/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	1 (9/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N = Negative association

Table 19 (continued): Statistically significant associations between variables pertaining to opportunities for off-line social interaction in each offenders home environment and variables pertaining to offender involvement in on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material

	Lives with parents or grandparents (<i>N</i> = 51)		Lives with partner (<i>N</i> = 35)		Lives with any other adults (<i>N</i> = 113)		Lives alone (<i>N</i> = 21)	
	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.
Only uses IRC, ICQ and/or Email to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 81)	32 (79/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	16 (79/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	64 (79/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	11 (79/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Websites to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 50)	15 (50/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	14 (50/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	37 (50/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	9 (50/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 46)	14 (45/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	13 (45/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	35 (45/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	7 (45/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Use of Websites and Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 36)	12 (36/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	10 (36/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	28 (36/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	5 (36/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>
Only uses Websites and/or Newsgroups to access objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 14)	4 (14/50/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (14/33/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	9 (14/109/138)	<i>n.s.</i>	3 (14/21/138)	<i>n.s.</i>

(*YCC*) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N = Negative association

Directed, Two Way Interaction

Chi square analyses considering the Internet applications used by the current sample of Internet censorship offenders to access objectionable material and the home and work environments of these offenders provide some support for the hypothesis that offenders who are most likely to engage in directed, two way interaction in their off-line environment will be most likely to engage in directed, two way interaction in the Internet environment. These analyses revealed that offenders who were residing with partners at the time that they were detected by CCU investigators were significantly likely to be identified as using both ICQ and Email to access objectionable material, and to be identified as demonstrating on-line social ties to other censorship offenders known to the CCU investigators. No other off-line relationships were found to be significantly associated with either ICQ or Email access to objectionable material, or with offenders regularly engaging on-line with known censorship offenders.

Group Based Interaction

Although an association was identified between offenders working in teams and only using IRC or only using socially facilitative Internet applications (eg. IRC, Email and/or ICQ) to access objectionable material, working in teams was not specifically associated with use of Email and/or ICQ. This lack of association suggests that offenders who worked in teams focused their activities on group based social interaction and any Email or ICQ use observed most probably resulted from functional requirements during the transfer of objectionable material between computers. Nevertheless, offenders who worked in teams were also identified as significantly unlikely to use Internet applications in which little or no social interaction was involved, such as websites and Newsgroups. These results provide

support for the hypothesis that offenders whose off-line environments support group based interaction will be most likely to engage in group based interaction in the Internet environment.

In line with the results of offenders who worked in teams, those who lived with parents or grandparents also demonstrated a propensity to select socially facilitative group based Internet applications to access objectionable material. These offenders were significantly likely to access objectionable material by way of File Transfer Protocols (FTP) facilitated through IRC. Indeed, this group demonstrated the highest rate of IRC use of any considered in this analysis (86 percent). In contrast to offenders who worked in teams, however, offenders who lived with parents or grandparents did not combine their IRC use with any other socially facilitative applications. Indeed, they were found to be significantly unlikely to use Email to access objectionable material. As such, it appears that Internet censorship offenders who lived with parents or grandparents relied on FTP to obtain and transfer objectionable material in the Internet environment.

Little or No Interaction

In contrast, to the relatively social orientation that offenders who resided or worked with others demonstrated in their choice of Internet applications, offenders who resided or worked alone demonstrated no particular preferences in terms of the type of applications they chose to access objectionable material. Although these offenders may have made use of IRC, ICQ and Email applications during their offence activities, they did not demonstrate a preference for these Internet applications over others such as Websites and Newsgroups. It is suggested that their choice of

applications may indicate a relatively opportunistic orientation to Internet censorship offending; making use of whatever application was available to them and likely to yield a positive result in terms of seeking the objectionable material they desired.

Offenders who were not working also failed to demonstrate a preference for applications that facilitated direct, two way and/or immediate on-line interaction with others (eg. IRC, ICQ and Email). They were, however, found to be significantly likely to use Newsgroups to access objectionable material. This choice may indicate a desire to avoid direct, personal and/or immediate on-line interaction with others. Given the relatively isolating impact that unemployment has been shown to have of individuals, and the relatively long periods of time that individuals who are unemployed may go without social contact, this finding appears to support the hypothesis that offenders who experience few opportunities for social interaction in their off-line home or work environments will be unlikely to seek opportunities for on-line social interaction.

Implications and Additional Analyses

Socially Oriented Internet Offenders

Comparison between the off-line relationships and indicators of on-line social connectivity of individual Internet censorship offenders supports the hypothesis that offenders who are most likely to engage with others in their home and work environments will be more likely to actively seek out opportunities to engage with others in the Internet environment. In turn, the offence related activities of these individuals may be subject to a greater level of social influence by on-line associates than the offence activities of individuals who do not choose to make use of these applications. As discussed in Chapter Five, given the reciprocal nature of much on-

line activity regarding objectionable material, together with the increased likelihood of habituation to such material associated with Internet based access, this influence may contribute to motivating offenders to produce their own objectionable images. As suggested by Taylor and Quayle (2003), the production of objectionable material for exchange with others via the Internet medium is likely to reinforce the ties between offenders and their on-line associates, provide them with increased status in the on-line community of individuals interested in the content of such material, and provide them with capital for purchasing additional examples of this type of material to add to their collections.

Opportunist Offence Patterns

While the impact of on-line social influence may contribute to the development of increased involvement in offence related activities amongst offenders who actively seek out on-line opportunities for interaction, this conclusion does not necessarily imply that less socially motivated offenders will demonstrate less involvement in offence related activities. In the current sample of Internet censorship offenders, those who lived and or worked in isolated conditions did not appear to demonstrate the same preference for socially facilitative Internet applications and direct, personal on-line interaction as offenders who lived or worked in conditions that provided increased opportunities for social interaction. However, only offenders who were not employed demonstrated a distinct preference for Internet applications that did not facilitate on-line social interaction. The remainder appeared to be opportunistic in their selection of Internet applications and orientation to on-line social interaction. Furthermore, this orientation appeared to be reflected in the offence related behaviours of this group of individuals. Table 20 provides details of additional

analyses considering the offence related behaviours of Internet censorship offenders who lived or worked in isolated conditions, or who did not work.

Table 20: Statistically significant associations between Internet censorship offenders living or working in isolated conditions, or not working, and offence related behaviours

	Lives Alone (<i>N</i> = 21)		Works alone (<i>N</i> = 38)		Does not work (<i>N</i> = 19)	
	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.	Frequency (Valid N: Row/ Column/Total)	Sig.
Has set up websites and/or sold objectionable material (<i>N</i> = 10)	5 (10/21/142)	<i>p</i> = 0.007 (<i>FET</i>)	5 (10/38/145)	<i>n.s.</i>	1 (10/19/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Has been convicted of a physical offence (<i>N</i> = 18)	6 (18/21/142)	<i>p</i> = 0.022 (<i>FET</i>)	6 (18/38/145)	<i>n.s.</i>	7 (18/19/145)	<i>p</i> = 0.003 (<i>FET</i>)
Has been convicted of a sexual offence (<i>N</i> = 12)	5 (12/21/142)	<i>p</i> = 0.011 (<i>FET</i>)	5 (12/38/145)	<i>n.s.</i>	4 (12/19/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Aged 40 years and older (<i>N</i> = 24)	8 (24/21/141)	<i>p</i> = 0.010 (<i>FET</i>)				
Possesses Objectionable material obtained from sources other than the Internet (<i>N</i> = 43)	9 (43/21/142)	<i>n.s.</i>	9 (43/38/145)	<i>n.s.</i>	10 (43/19/145)	<i>p</i> = 0.037 (χ^2 = 4.338) (YCC)
Collects non-objectionable material relevant to the content of the objectionable material selected (<i>N</i> = 75)	11 (75/21/142)	<i>n.s.</i>	25 (75/38/145)	<i>p</i> = 0.043 (χ^2 = 4.080)	10 (75/19/145)	<i>n.s.</i>
Found in possession of more than 979 objectionable images (<i>N</i> = 29)	7 (29/20/134)	<i>n.s.</i>	6 (23/37/102)	<i>n.s.</i>	9 (23/19/102)	<i>p</i> = 0.004 (<i>FET</i>)

(YCC) = χ^2 with Yates continuity correction, (*FET*) = Fishers exact test, *n.s.* = not statistically significant, ^N = Negative association

The results of the analyses presented in Table 20 reveal that Internet censorship offenders who lived alone were significantly likely to have been convicted of a physical offence, most notably for a crime of a sexual nature. Given that almost all of these convictions were recorded at least a year prior to detection for Internet censorship offences, and many preceded widespread Internet availability (including offences recorded in 1973, 1985 and 1988), the association between living alone and convictions for physical offences appears to suggest an established pattern of offence behaviour that most likely preceded the offender's Internet use. In line with this conclusion, offenders who lived alone were found to be significantly older than those who lived with others. Furthermore, conviction for a physical offence was the only variable pertaining to the offence activities of Individual censorship offenders found to be significantly associated with offenders initiating contact with children via the Internet medium. Two of the five offenders who had been convicted of a sexual offence against a female child were identified as engaging on-line with non-family children¹⁰⁸. Although involving a very small number of offenders, the exclusiveness of this association appears noteworthy. Assuming that individuals who have been convicted of physical offences against children are likely to find it difficult to gain physical access to children post conviction, they may simply become involved with Internet censorship offending as an alternative, or additional, means to satisfy their interest in the content of objectionable material. The case studies presented below appear to provide some support for this conclusion.

Offender S is 37 years old. He lives with his partner, his own children and has been a foster carer. He was recently charged with permitting a girl under 5 to perform an indecent act. He was found in possession of 2400 objectionable images as well as a

¹⁰⁸ Fishers exact test, $p=0.015$

relatively new looking video clips featuring apparently willing young girls between 12 and 16 posing/masturbating for the camera. Defendant T is completing a course in Computing and database management and provides IT support to [the local] intermediate school, as well as being a driver (taxi, metro bus, tour bus and intermediate school bus), a [mobile] ice cream operator, and school stationery supplier. He has had children over to play games on his iMac computer. Examination of computer sessions showed a lot of contacts with young girls aged from 10 to 16 (chat sessions showed discussions about sex primarily). He used ICQ, newsgroups and websites.

Defendant U is 44, he lives alone and is self employed. He used Websites, ICQ, Email, IRC, and Newsgroups to access objectionable images and his chat logs showed him to have had between 80 and 200 image files of child pornography (plus hundreds of website gifs – thumbnails), but most had been deleted. He claimed his computer had crashed and been rebuilt, [thus] explaining the absence of image files etc. His work computer and laptop also showed him to have spent a lot of time ‘surfing’ adult sites and viewing pictures of adult women, often featuring urination or lactation. Defendant U was also a regular visitor to a number of bestiality websites. Chat logs described Defendant U’s fantasies about sex with children, incest and bestiality fantasies, and included records of ‘cybersex’ with both young girls and youthful males. He has already been convicted for having sex with a young girl.

Notably, offenders who were not working were also identified as significantly likely to have been convicted of a physical crime, albeit not necessarily sexual in nature. In addition, these offenders were significantly likely to be found in possession of more than 979 objectionable images and objectionable material obtained from sources other than the Internet. Furthermore, a significant association was identified between the possession of moving images of objectionable material and convictions for physical offences.

Given that few of these 'other forms of objectionable material' were personally produced by offenders, this finding may also suggest a pre Internet history of involvement with objectionable material. Indeed, it is perhaps noteworthy that conviction for a physical (including sexual) offence was not found to be significantly associated with offenders being involved in the production of objectionable material. In Chapter Five, involvement in the production of objectionable material was identified as a means for offenders to develop mutually reinforcing relationships with each other. This did not appear to be a consideration for offenders who did not actively seek out on-line social relationships. Indeed, as demonstrated in the following case studies, in the case of individuals who had been convicted of sexual offences, objectionable material gained from sources other than the Internet was commonly presented or stored in a form that did not lend itself to be transferred on-line, even if it was personally produced.

Offender T is 30 years old and is flatting with his 'cousin' and friends (teenagers from 15 to 18 years). Police intelligence shows Offender T to have a predilection for young teenage boys and to have created situations where he has legitimate access. He has a conviction for possession of cannabis and utensils and a conviction concerning sexual involvement with a young male. Offender T is known to have created a 'peephole' through from his wardrobe to a shower room in a flat so he could spy on his teenage flatmates. A search of his room (during which time he became physically threatening, shouting and using threatening language) revealed a video tape made by the offender depicting a youth asleep while the offender/'cameraman' pulled down his pants/underpants. In addition, 350 image files, 2 webpages, 48 video clip files were found. He used Email, Newsgroups, Websites, IRC, and ICQ. Offender T is believed to

be 'on the run' and living in camping grounds etc. He is into the drug scene fairly heavily and has told friends he is on the run from drug dealers.

Defendant R lives alone and is an invalid beneficiary. He has convictions for a sexual crime involving a young male and a sexual assault on an adult. He was found in possession of image printouts, story printouts and books. He obtains the stories and images via Newsgroups. When found leaving the address to go train spotting Defendant R had a collection of child porn stories with him. After the warrant information was obtained that he was using a local internet café to access text stories from nifty.org in the teen area.

The lack of social motivation demonstrated by the subgroup of Internet censorship offenders described here is also supported by the association between offenders living alone and offenders being involved in selling objectionable material for a financial profit rather than sharing it freely on-line. Furthermore, in a number of cases, the sale of objectionable material was found to occur outside of the Internet environment. Indeed, as demonstrated in the following case studies, although these individuals were unlikely to be identified as associating on-line with other known censorship offenders, they were commonly found to associate off-line with other physical sex offenders.

Defendant H is 40 years, lives alone and is self employed. He is heavily involved in child pornography and associates [off-line] with known paedophiles in the [location name] area. He has a conviction for inducing a boy aged between 8 and 9 to do an indecent act with him. At the time of detection by the CCU he was found to possess a number of credit cards and club cards, under three different names. Defendant H stated that a person had dropped off pictures to his house for copying and description was roughly similar to defendant H. Defendant H's computer and defendant I's both showed signs of an additional hard drive being attached that held child porn...Later on,

defendant H was found in possession of a number of hard drives, one of which held 15000 pictures... It was thought that these drives may have been one of those that we believed at that time was being moved around by this group.... A representative of the New Zealand Man-Boy Love Association came forward, after the defendant left New Zealand, and stated that he was his legal representative. His CV was on an old computer that was seized and this had been compiled by the defendant with an extra area at the end. It was titled 'defendant H v The Powerful Ones' and detailed the search warrants, charges, arrests, decisions, appeals, restraining orders, media articles, press complaints, judicial review, death of witness, etc..... Documents found in his possession discussed the persecution of paedophiles by the public and compared it to the burning of witches at Salem. It further went on to suggest that Homosexuals had got their freedom and that soon paedophiles would be next to freely pursue their sexuality. [He has] also [been] charged with willfully attempting to obstruct the course of justice. 60 charges have been laid under our act against [the offender] however he left for Thailand a few days after the search warrant was carried out on his home. He is believed to be living in Thailand close to [another known censorship offender] and regularly travels (thought to travel to Cambodia to renew passport for re-entrance to Thailand)....

Defendant Y is 41 years, lives with his partner and is a sickness beneficiary. He has been convicted of a sexual offence against a female aged less than 16 years and is friends [off-line] with a number of other individuals who have been convicted of or charged with similar offences. He also has a previous conviction for a censorship offence and was found in possession of 13000 objectionable images. The collection is believed to have been [physically] transported from user to user and installed to their computers. [In addition], Defendant Y was found in possession of magazines and videotapes of objectionable content. He was also found to possess a large number of images of clothed boys. Defendant Y has used IRC, websites and newsgroups to access and download images. He presents as a very physically intimidating person but has very poor interpersonal skills and fully confessed the offending.

Defendant W is 33 years old and is a self employed computer technician. He has been convicted twice for engaging in a sexual acts with female children and lives with [another individual who has also been] convicted of child rape. He was detected as a result of interacting with another offender using IRC and does not appear to use any other Internet applications. No objectionable images were stored on his PC but he was found in possession of books of objectionable content.

Defendant V is 50 years old, has been convicted of a sexual offence and lives alone. However, he says he prefers Philippine women and is presently obtaining one to marry. Defendant V is not working but is an accident compensation beneficiary and has set up a business selling CD-ROMs. Information for warrant was obtained from an anonymous letter and from police. He had spent 50 hours on-line during the week prior to investigation and used websites and newsgroups to access objectionable material. Defendant V was found in possession of 5000 objectionable images and was very abusive to the CCU investigator who found them.

As evident in these case studies, a number of the offenders who had been convicted of a physical offence were found to be neither working nor living with others. Furthermore, when variables pertaining to isolated home and work conditions were combined, associations between these variables and those identified as indicative of relatively unconstrained Internet censorship offending appeared to increase in strength. Although only five offenders were identified as both living alone and not working, three of these were found to have been convicted of a physical crime¹⁰⁹. In addition, three of the four offenders who lived alone and did not work (and whose on-line hours for the week prior to detection was recorded) had spent in excess of 30

¹⁰⁹ Fishers exact test, $p=0.023$, $N=103$.

hours on-line during the week prior to CCU detection¹¹⁰. In turn, of the seven offenders who were found to both live and work alone, three were involved in setting up websites of objectionable material and/or selling objectionable material¹¹¹ and three were found to be involved in the production of objectionable material¹¹².

On-Line Influence and ‘Social’ Versus ‘Opportunistic Offence Patterns

Internet censorship offenders who live or work in socially isolated conditions appear to be less likely than others to seek or be influenced by social support for their involvement in Internet censorship offending. Given the historic nature of some of the offence patterns demonstrated by them, it may be assumed that they have already accepted involvement in these activities as part of their self concept and their solitary lifestyles suggest that they do not much value social interaction. These individuals may be conceived of as demonstrating an instrumental orientation to both the Internet and interaction with others during on-line involvement. The Internet and any on-line contacts they make are simply instruments through which they may acquire the resources they need to offend are acquired.

In contrast, offenders who lived or worked with others and who demonstrated a preference for social involvement during Internet censorship offence activities may be considered to show a more ‘ritual’ orientation to offending. As described by Rubin (2002), a ritual orientation to media use involves a general focus on the medium, rather than the content portrayed through that medium, as a way to achieve personal gratifications; including social gratifications. Therefore, while individuals who demonstrate a ritual orientation to Internet use may not actively seek to commit

¹¹⁰ Fishers exact test, $p=0.024$, $N=103$

¹¹¹ Fishers exact test, $p=0.009$, $N=103$

¹¹² Fishers exact test, $p=0.019$, $N=103$

Internet censorship offences, given a pre-existing interest in the content of objectionable material, on-line association with others who encourage this interest may facilitate involvement in activities conducive to Internet censorship offending. As suggested in Chapter Three individuals who identify their ability to engage socially with others as an important part of their self concept may initially limit or deny any investment of time and resources in activities that their off-line social associates may not approve of and/or which they perceive as being at odds with their pro-social self concept. However, if they receive sufficient social encouragement and reinforcement from on-line associates the dissonance they perceive between their self concept and their interest in the content of objectionable material may reduce. In turn, assuming that they are not obliged to invest time and energy in off-line relationships to ensure social and financial security, their willingness to invest time and resources into the gratification of this interest may increase. At the same time, given the likely effect that this reduction in dissonance will have in terms of alleviating stress associated with their interest in the content of objectionable material, they may also be increasingly motivated to maintain on-line relationships, to the detriment of relationships in their off-line environment.

Summary

In line with Canters concept of Interpersonal Coherence (1994, 1995) the results presented in the current chapter reveal an association between opportunities for interaction in offenders' off-line environments and indicators of on-line social connectivity. Specifically, they show that offenders who live or work in conditions conducive to off-line interaction demonstrate greater preference for Internet applications facilitating on-line interaction than offenders who do not. These

offenders are also most likely to be identified as having formed on-line relationships with other Internet censorship offenders.

Given this apparently 'social' orientation to on-line behaviour, offenders who demonstrate on and off-line social ties are more likely to be influenced by, or respond to on-line encouragement in relation to involvement in Internet censorship offence activities than their less 'socially' oriented counterparts. Nevertheless, these conclusions do not preclude individuals who demonstrate a relatively 'a-social' orientation to on-line activities from demonstrating relatively unconstrained offence and offence related activities. Indeed, the results show that, in this sample at least, Internet censorship offenders who were least likely to demonstrate a preference for on-line interaction were most likely to have been convicted of a physical offence. However, as indicated by the fact that most of these convictions occurred prior to investigation for Internet censorship offences, it is suggested that the propensity to engage in such behaviour existed prior to on-line involvement and therefore was not the result of on-line social influence. If a relatively unconstrained expression of an individual's interest in the content of objectionable material is already a part of their lifestyle, on-line involvement with objectionable material may simply be one form of this expression and social contact with other offenders will be largely irrelevant to decisions regarding ongoing offence activities.

Chapter 8: Discussion

This thesis aimed to explore the relationship between the level of involvement in offence related behaviour demonstrated by a sample of 145 Internet censorship offenders and indicators of the on and off-line social interactivity of each individual offender. Data collected during these investigations, under the direction of the author of this thesis, were reanalysed for the purpose of the current research. Based on a review of the literature pertaining to Internet censorship offending and other forms of Internet use and misuse, a theoretical framework integrating media, criminological and psychological theory was developed to explain the way in which these variables may interact to influence offence behaviour. This framework is outlined in the following section.

Theoretical Framework

The Uses and Gratifications Model of Media Use

Drawing on expectancy value theory, the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement states that an individual's media use is determined by his or her expectations regarding the likelihood that such use will result in the gratification of social and psychological needs (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974; cited in Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren, 1985; Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985). In addition, media use is said to be mediated by the perception that it will not lead to socially or personally negative consequences. Research undertaken within the uses and gratifications framework has shown that different individuals may be motivated by different needs to use the same type of media. Similarly, those using different

types of media may be motivated by similar needs. Although by no means comprehensive, researchers have identified some of the most common needs motivating media use. These include consumption of media and use of media content as a means to achieve diversion (pass time, escape from routine problems/emotional release), personal relationships (companionship, social relationships, social utility), personal identity (self reference, reality exploration, value reinforcement), and surveillance (information seeking) - (McQuail, Blumler and Brown, 1972). The Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement states that only if an individual believes that specific media content will provide him or her with benefits, such as those listed above, will he or she choose to make use of/consume that content.

The Uses and Gratifications model of media use does not attempt to explain why different individuals perceive different media content to be of benefit to them, other than to suggest that individual preferences will be determined by personally significant social and psychological influences (Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren, 1985; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). This conclusion conforms to social psychological and developmental theories of human behaviour (eg. See Bandura, 1977; Fishbein and Azjen, 1975) and is supported by the results of research considering media consumption and effects (Brown, 1996; Freedman, 2002; Gauntlett, 1998; Gaziano, 2001; Malamuth, Addison and Koss, 2000; Palermo, 1995). In the case of the illicit use of specific types of media to obtain gratifications, these differences may be explained by the influence of social and psychological constructs, such as those espoused in Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) self-control theory.

Individual expectations regarding the likelihood that a medium will gratify a specific need are said to arise through communication with other individuals, from the mass media, or through associated experiences with the medium identified (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985). Of these sources, social communication is identified as exerting the greatest influence on media choice. The social environment occupied by an individual is also said to exert significant influence on the time and energy that he or she is able or willing to invest in the pursuit of specific types of media related gratification (Blumler, 1985; Canary and Spitzberg, 1993; Perse and Courtright, 1993; Rubin and Rubin, 1982). As stated by Rubin (2002), the media competes with other sources of gratification for an individual's attention and other sources of gratification include that received as a result of interpersonal contact.

Uses and Gratifications research suggests that interpersonal sources of gratification tend to be favoured over media sources (Perse and Courtright, 1993; Perse and Rubin, 1990; Rubin, 2002; Rubin and Rubin, 1982). Where individuals are able to gratify their social and psychological needs through interpersonal interaction, they will be less likely to engage with the media. In turn, where these sources are unavailable to an individual, the uses and gratifications model suggests that he or she will be more likely to make use of the media (Surrette, 1998). Similarly, a lack of alternative sources of gratification is perceived to increase the likelihood that an individual will become dependent on a specific type of media content. Although media use has not been verified as having direct effects on individual behaviour, media dependency is perceived to increase the likelihood that this will occur, especially if reliance on the media as an individual's sole source of information about an issue leads that individual to form distorted views about appropriate behaviour in relation to that issue.

Uses and Gratifications Associated with Accessing Objectionable Material via the Internet

Although definitions of what constitutes legally ‘objectionable’ media content vary between states and nations, in most cases these definitions share in common the premise that if the activities portrayed in the material were physically enacted, they would be considered illegal (at least under local legislation). Commonly, media content that is considered objectionable includes that which depicts the sexualisation of children (eg. child pornography). In addition, a number of jurisdictions legislate against material depicting sexual interaction with animals and/or the deceased, as well as violent and/or degrading sexual and non-sexual activity involving adults or children. Given the illicit nature of these activities, together with the social and moral sanctions against their portrayal, interpersonal sources of gratification are unlikely to be readily accessible to the majority of individuals who seek to fulfil an associated social or psychological need.

Application of the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement therefore suggests an increased likelihood that individuals who express an interest in, or perceive a benefit from, the content of legally objectionable media will be attracted to the immediacy, accessibility and perceived anonymity of the Internet environment as a source of content conducive to gratifying these needs. Unlike other forms of media, the Internet also has the added advantage of providing opportunities for immediate, accessible and relatively anonymous interpersonal interaction within the on-line environment (Cooper, Boies, Maheu and Greenfield, 1999; Taylor et al, 2001). Although the Uses and Gratifications model of media involvement does not account for the influence of interpersonal associations formed as a result of the media

experience, the illicit nature of Internet based involvement with objectionable media content suggests the potential for application of criminological theories more suited to such an analysis.

The Aged Graded Theory of Social Control

Sampson and Laub's (1993) criminological theory of Age Graded Social Control suggests that individuals will devote increasing amounts of time and energy to relationships that they believe will provide them with the greatest return on their investment (e.g. relationships that foster a sense of interdependence). In turn, these relationships will have the greatest influence on their behaviour (Sampson and Laub, 1990; Sampson and Laub, 1993). As with any investment, the exact way in which time and energy is expended towards the maintenance of these relationships will depend on, and be directly related to, the perceived benefits of their expenditure.

In the case of individuals who use the Internet to access material defined as legally objectionable, relationships formed on-line may provide returns in the form of access to examples of objectionable material not readily available through other sources, Internet based or otherwise. Research into the use of the Internet to obtain objectionable material has shown that associated on-line interaction commonly involves two or more parties exchanging examples of objectionable material between them (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a; Taylor, 1999). As with other goal oriented activities, searching for objectionable material as part of a dyad or group allows for a greater amount of material to be quickly uncovered than searches undertaken by a lone individual. Similarly, through involvement with others who share their interests, consumers of objectionable material increase the possibility that they will encounter

individuals who possess, or are able to procure or produce, material that specifically meets the needs that they seek to gratify (Barron and Kimmel, 2000; Healy, 1996; Taylor, Quayle and Holland, 2001). Once procured, objectionable material obtained through the on-line trading process may be used for personal gratification (eg. to achieve sexual arousal and release) or as currency to access additional examples (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a; Taylor, 1999). In addition, on-line relationships may provide those who demonstrate an interest in objectionable material with social support regarding the source of their attraction to the activities portrayed in said material (eg. sexual attraction towards children), and/or access to potential subjects for off-line enactment of associated fantasies (Quayle and Taylor, 2003; Taylor, 1999). Such involvement may also be used to generate financial returns in the form of profit from associated business enterprises (Healy, 1996).

In turn, investment of time and energy in on-line relationships developed during the process of Internet censorship offending may include obtaining specific examples of objectionable material for on-line associates. Indeed, Quayle and Taylor (2002a) and Taylor and Quayle (2003) report cases in which Internet censorship offenders describe actively seeking out rare and/or difficult to access examples of objectionable material specifically because they believe that these example will be of use to on-line associates. Investment in on-line relationships may also include providing on-line associates with social support for their attraction to the activities portrayed in the objectionable material in which they express an interest, accessing potential subjects for their off-line enactment of associated fantasies, and financial contribution to their businesses. Where the benefits of such investment are perceived to be of significant value the time and energy devoted to on-line relationships is likely to markedly reduce

the time and energy available for investment in other relationships (Kraut et al, 1998; Quayle and Taylor, 2003; Quayle and Taylor, 2002a). In turn, the potential for these other relationships to influence or limit the on-line behaviour of those involved must also reduce, along with any socially related inhibitions regarding associated activities such as the enactment of behaviours similar to those portrayed in the objectionable material itself.

Applying Sampson and Laubs' theory of age graded social control to Internet based relationships developed during the process of accessing objectionable material; it is suggested that the perceived benefits of these relationships may exert as strong an influence on the time and energy that individuals dedicate to future Internet activity as off-line relationships. In line with this conclusion, it is hypothesised that use of socially interactive Internet applications to access objectionable material through on-line relationships will be associated with increased time and energy invested in (increased involvement in) associated on-line offence activities. Given the findings of research demonstrating the propensity for individuals engaged in high levels of on-line social interaction to develop associated off-line behaviours (Schneider, 2000; Schneider, 2000b), it is also hypothesised that these individuals will be most likely to engage in offence related activities outside of the Internet environment. In contrast, use of less socially interactive Internet applications should be associated with lower levels of time and energy invested in both on and off-line involvement with objectionable material.

In order to test this hypothesis, it is necessary to distinguish between individuals who use socially interactive Internet applications during their on-line involvement with

objectionable material and those who do not. This distinction raises the question of *why* some individuals choose to make use of socially interactive Internet applications and others do not. Sampson and Laub's theory of age graded social control suggests that individuals who do not invest time and energy in specific relationships fail to do so because they fail to perceive any personally or socially meaningful benefits from such involvement. However, this conclusion does not explain how they decide that these benefits do not exist. In order to facilitate explanation of this phenomenon the current thesis draws on research supporting Canter's (1995) concept of Interpersonal coherence between criminal and non-criminal behaviours.

Interpersonal Coherence

Research undertaken in relation to Canters concept of Interpersonal Coherence reveals that individuals demonstrate behavioural consistency between their approach to social transactions occurring during both criminal and non-criminal activities (Canter, 2000, 1995, 1994). This consistency is said to arise from 'personal narratives' developed through previous experience with specific forms of social interaction and the perceived outcomes of these experiences. Personal narratives may be conceptualised as personal 'behavioural manuals' that are used by individuals to determine and predict their current and future behaviour (Maruna, 2000). Integrating these concepts into Sampson and Laub's theory of age graded social control; one would expect that individuals who have previously received personally meaningful benefits from specific forms of social interaction during non-criminal activities will be more likely to attempt to use these forms of social interaction during criminal activities.

In terms of Internet based involvement in objectionable material, the concept of Interpersonal Coherence predicts that Internet censorship offenders who make use of social relationships to achieve personal benefits during off-line activities will be more likely than others to engage in and make use of social relationships during on-line activities. In turn, it is hypothesised that individuals who live and/or work in environments that provide them with opportunities to regularly engage in social interaction will be more likely than those who do not to seek out on-line opportunities for social interaction and make use of socially facilitative Internet applications during the process of accessing objectionable material. Therefore, these individuals should demonstrate a greater investment in on-line relationships and greater scope in terms of associated behaviours than their less socially oriented counterparts.

The current chapter will review the results of research undertaken in order to verify the relevance of these hypotheses. The results of a series of analyses aimed at exploring the relationship between indicators of on and off-line social interactivity and the offence behaviours of a sample of Internet censorship offenders will be presented. Using this information, an attempt will be made to distinguish between different subgroups of offence behaviour and social interactivity. Finally, the implications of these findings will be reviewed, including discussion of the ways that resulting knowledge may be applied to the development of policy and procedure aimed at enhancing law enforcement and criminal justice practices. Potential avenues for further research aimed at generating information to enhance the effectiveness of these activities will also be identified.

Results

Involvement in Internet Censorship Offending

The results of the analyses presented in the preceding chapters suggest that individuals who access objectionable material via the Internet, whether child pornography or some other content, are a heterogeneous group. Although primarily male, these individuals differ according to age, relationship and work status, level of involvement in offending and associated activities, and method of offending. Furthermore, as demonstrated in Table 21, these differences were found to interact to form distinct patterns of offence behaviour between groups of offenders.

Table 21: Patterns of offence and offence related behaviour by Internet application used and associated socio-demographic variables

Internet application used to access objectionable material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICQ and Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRC only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTP facilitated through IRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No preference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsgroups
This Internet application is most commonly used by offenders who are:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living with a partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in a team environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living with parents/grandparents • Aged 24 years and younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Alone • Aged 40 years and older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed
This Internet application is associated with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly engaging in online interaction with other known censorship offenders • Producing/generating objectionable material • Creating websites and/or selling objectionable material • Using an identifiable system to organise the objectionable images in their possession • Access to children and others similar to the subjects of the objectionable material selected • Collecting non-objectionable material of relevance to the objectionable material selected (eg. Photographs of children and pictures from magazines and advertising material), • Previous conviction/s for a censorship offence, • Previous conviction/s for a physical offence • Spending more than 30 hours on-line during the week prior to detection, • Storing objectionable material using movable devices • Using three or more internet applications to access objectionable material, • Possession of more than 979 objectionable images • Possession of objectionable images obtained from sources other than the Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending less than 30 hours on-line during the week prior to detection • No previous convictions for physical offences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No use Email to access objectionable material • No objectionable material other than images accessed via the Internet • No identifiable system for organising the objectionable images in their possession • No contact with individuals similar to those portrayed in the objectionable images they selected • No involvement in creating websites and/or selling objectionable material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous conviction/s for a sexual offence • Use of the Internet to initiate contact with children • Creating websites and/or selling objectionable material • Associating off-line with other physical offenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous conviction/s for a physical crime • Possession of more than 979 objectionable images • Possession of objectionable images obtained from sources other than the Internet (especially moving images)

Use of Internet Applications Facilitating Direct, Personal, On-Line Interaction and the Formation of Social Ties to Other Offenders

As demonstrated in Table 21, offenders who used ICQ and/or Email as a means of accessing objectionable material appeared to demonstrate greater involvement¹¹³ in Internet censorship offending and offence related activities than offenders who did not (eg. offenders who used Newsgroups, Websites, and/or IRC as means to access objectionable material). Specifically, use of Email and/or ICQ was associated with offenders engaging in a greater range of behaviours that were not specifically required to commit an Internet censorship offence, but were demonstrably related to an interest in the content of objectionable material. Of particular note, offenders who made use of Email and/or ICQ to access objectionable material were found to be most likely to be involved in the production/generation of objectionable material.

Given the capacity for ICQ and Email applications to be used to facilitate social interaction in the Internet environment, these findings appear to support the hypothesised association between on-line social connectivity and the investment of increased time and energy in on-line offence activities. Furthermore, differences between the functionality of ICQ and Email and other Internet applications point to the exact nature of on-line social interaction associated with such investment.

ICQ may be distinguished from other Internet applications such as Newsgroups and Websites on the basis that it allows individuals to engage in interaction with others in real time. However, this capacity is also provided by IRC (Internet Relay Chat) applications

¹¹³ As measured by the level of constraint demonstrated through offence and offence related activities.

and it is not provided by Email. Instead, Email and ICQ differ from all other applications considered in the current research in that they enable on-line interaction that is highly directed in nature. Email and ICQ messages are sent from one offender directly to another offender who is distinguished from the majority of Internet participants on the basis that his or her Email and/or ICQ contact details are known to the offender initiating the communication. Knowledge of ICQ or Email contact details implies a level of trust and intimacy between offenders that is not required for participation in group based applications such as IRC or newsgroups. It also implies a sense of mutual recognition.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two suggests that in the case of individuals who use the Internet to access objectionable material, on-line interaction usually involves or is facilitated by the exchange of objectionable material. This exchange reinforces the offender's participation in activities facilitating online interaction and encourages further involvement in these activities. In Chat-rooms and Newsgroups, objectionable material may be made available for group consumption and, as such, some participants may receive reinforcement without actually contributing any material of their own. In turn, the type of interaction that receives reinforcement may be relatively passive. In contrast, the mutuality of the interaction facilitated through Email or ICQ infers that all participants must contribute something to the process for each to receive appropriate reinforcement and encouragement to engage in further interaction. It is therefore concluded that the association between use of Email and ICQ and heightened involvement in Internet censorship offending results from the sense of interdependence that use of these applications both facilitates and necessitates.

Given this conclusion, it is of interest why some offenders would choose to make use of Email and/or ICQ rather than simply relying on other applications in which less personal effort is required to facilitate access to objectionable material. Analysis of case studies of individual offence behaviour in relation to on-line activity suggests that individuals who choose to make use of Email and/or ICQ may demonstrate a distinctly social orientation to Internet censorship offending. These case studies provide examples of Internet censorship offenders 'going on-line' specifically for the purpose of sharing their fantasies and experiences regarding the content of objectionable material. In other examples, offenders appeared to seek out and maintain on-line relationships through the distribution of personally produced objectionable material. Given that individual offenders who engaged in this type of behaviour were unlikely to possess large numbers of objectionable images, it is suggested that their primary motivation for going on-line was the production and distribution of such material. Furthermore, the absence of any association between offenders producing objectionable material for on-line distribution and selling objectionable material, or between offenders producing objectionable material and having a history of physical offences against the type of individuals portrayed in this material, suggests that this behaviour was neither financially motivated nor a by-product of other criminal activity. Indeed, most of the personally produced material was presented as text, and therefore did not actually require the physical abuse of those portrayed as the subject of the objectionable content (eg. children involved in sexual intercourse with adults).

In line with the findings of Quayle and Taylor (2002a), Taylor, Quayle and Holland (2001) and Taylor (1999), the qualitative data presented in these case studies suggest that for some individuals' social reinforcement obtained through involvement in Internet censorship offending, as opposed to reinforcement on the basis of the objectionable material they receive through this process, may be a motivating factor in relation to ongoing participation in associated activities. In turn, the results imply that the on-line interaction that is facilitated through producing and sharing objectionable material may reinforce and, in doing so, influence offence behaviour.

Off-Line Environments and On-Line Behaviour

Socially Involved Offenders

The distinction between Internet censorship offenders who demonstrate a social orientation to on-line activity and those who do not appears to be reflected in the off-line environment of these individuals. The results presented in the preceding chapters demonstrate an association between opportunities for off-line interaction in offenders home and work environments and uptake of Internet applications conducive to on-line social interaction. Offenders who resided with partners, parents or grandparents, or who worked with others in team environments, were significantly more likely to demonstrate a preference for using Internet applications that facilitated on-line interaction (eg. IRC, ICQ and Email), than offenders who lived or worked alone, or who were unemployed. Furthermore, offenders who were judged most likely to engage in directed, two way interaction off-line (e.g. those living with partners) were found to be most likely to demonstrate a preference for applications (e.g. ICQ and Email) facilitating directed, two way interaction on line, and to engage in regular on-line interaction with other offenders.

These findings conform to the concept of Interpersonal Coherence (Canter, 1994, 1995) and provide support for the hypothesis that offenders who are most likely to engage in social interaction in their off-line environment will be most likely to seek social interaction in the on-line environment.

'Isolated' Offenders

Despite claims that the Internet provides a medium for 'previously isolated' individuals to come together and gain social support for their interest in the content of objectionable material, the results suggest that only offenders who frequently interact with others in their off-line environment are likely to seek interaction in the Internet environment. For individuals who do not demonstrate social ties in their home or work environment, the results presented in the preceding chapters suggest that involvement in Internet censorship offending, and development of associated behaviours, occur independently of encouragement or support from others in the Internet environment. Although some offenders who lived or worked alone, or who were unemployed were found to use applications that facilitated on-line interaction, they did not demonstrate a specific preference for these applications, at least not as a means of accessing objectionable material.

In terms of offence behaviours, Internet censorship offenders who lived and/or worked in isolated conditions (including unemployed offenders) were significantly likely to possess a conviction for a physical offence, be involved in selling objectionable material, and be found to possess objectionable material from sources other than the Internet. They were also significantly older than other offenders. Most of the physical offences for which

Internet censorship offenders had been convicted were sexual offences and most sexual offences involved children.

Given that convictions for physical offences commonly preceded detection in relation to Internet censorship offences, often by many years, in the case of these offenders Internet censorship offending appears to have been an extension of already well established physical offence behaviour. Similarly, very little of the objectionable material that was sourced from avenues other than the Internet and found in the possession of these offenders was personally produced. As such, their possession of objectionable material from sources other than the Internet may also indicate involvement in the acquisition of objectionable material prior to the Internet. Certainly, the fact that most such material was kept in a form not easily transferable to the Internet (eg. books and video recordings) suggests a lack of motivation to share it on-line and, in turn, a lack of desire for social reinforcement for this type of activity.

In contrast to the social orientation of other offenders, then, offenders who fail to demonstrate a preference for using socially facilitative Internet applications to access objectionable material appear to use the Internet ‘opportunistically’ (see Rubin, 2002). The Internet, and any interaction occurring as a result of its use, may be seen as a means for these offenders to complement or enhance other offence activities or, in the case of offenders who sell objectionable material, as a means to generate income from material acquired through these other activities. In line with this conclusion, offenders who had

been convicted of sexual offence against a child were also identified as most likely to use the Internet to seek contact with children.

Assuming that it might be difficult for individuals to obtain physical access to children once they have been convicted of a physical offence against a child, the use of the Internet as a means of developing relationships with potential victims makes implicit sense. Indeed, the results showed no association between Internet censorship offenders having been convicted of a physical offence and having physical access to children through work or voluntary activities. In turn, as suggested by Lanning (1992) and Langevin and Curnoe (2004), these offenders may collect objectionable material, particularly child pornography, as much for its use in grooming potential victims and normalising the behaviour they expect of them, as for any other more personal gratification. Together these findings suggest that the focus of these offenders may not actually be on either the objectionable material or the social interaction facilitating its acquisition, but rather the potential for this material and medium to support the interest that they show in its content during off-line activities. In line with this conclusion, it is of note that although these individuals generally did not live or work with others or regularly engage with other offenders on-line, case studies showed that many had engaged in off-line contact with others who had also been convicted of physical offences. These findings suggest that individuals who are interested in the content of objectionable material may not be as socially isolated as the literature about them often implies.

Results Summary

The results of the research presented in this thesis suggest at least two clearly distinguishable groups of Internet censorship offenders. On the one hand, are offenders who demonstrate a history of physical offence behaviour that precedes Internet uptake. These individuals use the Internet opportunistically to complement their interest in physical offending, including use of the Internet as a means to access potential victims of physical offences. On the other hand are offenders whose offence behaviour is mediated by on-line social relationships. These individuals appear to choose the Internet as a means of accessing objectionable material as much for the social interaction that the use of socially facilitative Internet applications allows them to engage in, as for the gratification that they receive from the material itself. Although these offenders demonstrate a clear interest in objectionable material and may also have a history of physical offending, albeit one that is less likely to have resulted in conviction, their behaviour suggests a desire for social reinforcement motivating some offence activities. As few of them demonstrated off-line relationships conducive to providing social reinforcement for their interest in the content of objectionable material, it is suggested that on-line relationships with other Internet censorship offenders are of particular importance and ‘value’ to them. In turn, on-line interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material is likely to have a greater influence in terms of the likelihood that these offenders will engage in future offence behaviours, and/or develop additional offence behaviours, than any such interaction engaged in by Internet censorship offenders who demonstrate a more opportunistic orientation to the Internet.

The findings regarding the different orientations of Internet censorship offenders to on-line social activity provide support for the model of offence behaviour developed and presented in Chapter Three of this thesis (see Figure 8 for a simplified version of this model). The distinction between the two groups of offenders reflects the distinction between ‘socially independent’ and ‘socially interdependent’ offenders identified in this model. Notably, the results of the current analysis reveal that socially interdependent offenders are more likely than socially independent offenders to engage in social interaction in their off-line (home and work) environment. Socially interdependent offenders’ apparently social orientation to Internet censorship offending is consistent with the more social nature of their lifestyles, as compared to the less social nature of the lifestyles of offenders who do not demonstrate this orientation. This distinction (between socially independent and socially interdependent offenders) supports the concept of Interpersonal Coherence as an important predictor of the nature and outcomes of on-line interactions during Internet censorship offence behaviours.

As indicated in Chapter Three, the concept of Interpersonal Coherence suggests that when confronted with a new environment, whether during the commission of a crime or in other day to day activities, individuals will navigate that environment using strategies that they have gained familiarity with in other environments. Thus, individuals who are comfortable interacting with others off-line will choose to interact with others on-line, whereas those who are less comfortable in social situations will tend to avoid them regardless of the medium. Similarly, individuals who use social relationships to gain assistance and direction in their off-line lives will be more likely to seek out on-line

social contacts for this purpose. In turn, offenders who demonstrate off-line social ties will be more likely than those who do not to become involved in on-line social interaction and to be influenced by social reinforcement resulting from this interaction to invest increased time and energy in their offence behaviour.

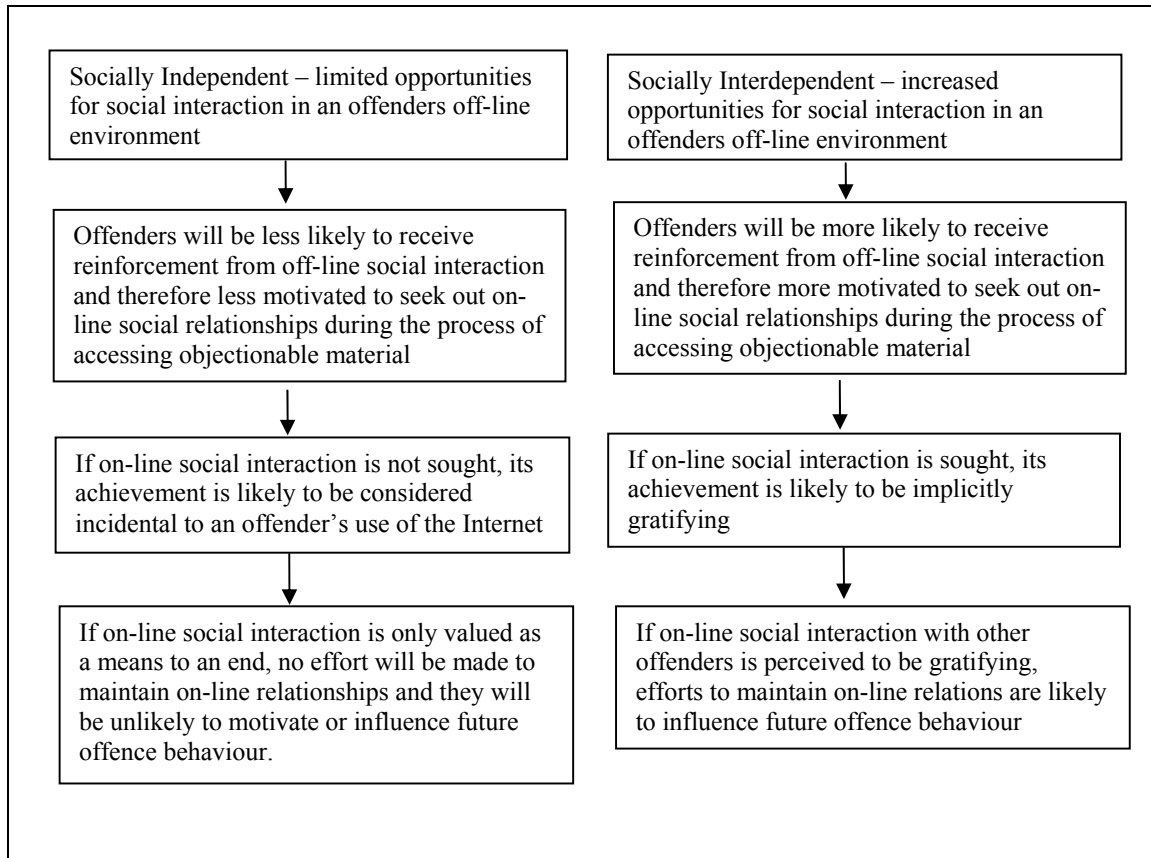


Figure 8: Simplified model of the social aspects of Internet censorship offending

Implications

The distinct motivations and offence patterns demonstrated by socially independent and socially interdependent Internet censorship offenders suggest the need for law enforcement and justice agencies to develop different responses to investigating, managing and preventing Internet censorship offence behaviour amongst different populations of offenders. These patterns also have implications in terms of the risk of physical offending associated with each such population and the way in which this risk may manifest through offender behaviour and on-line relationships.

The Relationship Between Objectionable Material and Physical Offences

The literature reviewed in Chapter One reveals a paucity of evidence for a direct relationship between the use of objectionable material and physically offending in a manner consistent with the content of that material. It is commonly accepted that while use of objectionable material may indicate a propensity to commit such offences, exposure to objectionable material is not sufficient to motivate individuals to physically offend. Indeed, it is argued that individuals who do commit physical offences may come to use objectionable material (particularly child pornography) for the same reasons that they seek physical contact with individuals similar to the subjects of that material; to ‘feed’ a personal interest relating to the actions or people depicted or enacted. To simplify this argument, individuals who consume child pornography and who commit sexual offences against children may be likened (analogously) to individuals who consume fishing magazines and who go fishing. Fishing magazines may provide individuals with information or ideas that enhance subsequent fishing experiences, or

provide them associated vicarious experiences when they are unable to go fishing, but if they had no interest in fishing, it would be unlikely that they would have any use for the magazines. In turn, it may be suggested that sexually offending against children may actually be a better predictor of child pornography use than vice versa.

Of note, although significant when compared to the incidence amongst the general population, only a small number of the Internet censorship offenders in the current sample were identified as having previously been convicted of a physical offence similar to the content of the objectionable material that they selected. Furthermore, although some of the individuals who had previously been convicted in relation to physical offences (particularly sexual offences against children) were found to use the Internet to make contact with actual children, this type of behaviour was not commonly observed across the entire sample of Internet censorship offenders. Given the earlier conclusion that objectionable material may complement, but is unlikely to be favoured over physical offending, the lack of effort that individuals interested in consuming this material invest in making contact with potential victims for actual offences appears surprising.

It is possible, and indeed probable, that some of the current sample of Internet censorship offenders had committed physical offences in line with their interest in objectionable material, but had simply not been caught. It is also possible that some offenders had used the Internet to make contact with potential victims of physical offences and that evidence of this contact, for whatever reason, had simply not been found on their computers. In support of these conclusions, investigation by the CCU occasionally lead to the

identification of personally produced objectionable material suggesting the sexual abuse of children by individuals who had not previously been investigated for offences of this nature. This material was subsequently submitted to the police and those involved became the subject of on-going inquiries. At the time of initiating the current research, the outcomes of most of these investigations were unknown; therefore they were not included in the analyses discussed here. Furthermore, in terms of the total number of offenders sampled, and specifically in terms of those identified as involved in the production of objectionable material, these enquiries were relatively few (see Appendix F for more detail regarding these offenders). The fact remains, then, that the majority of the Internet censorship offenders identified in the current sample appeared to have no background of physical offence behaviour and did not appear to use the Internet to enable such behaviour. Nevertheless, this fact does not preclude the possibility that these individuals will physically offend at some future time.

The New Relationship Between Objectionable Material and Physical Offences

Exposure to child pornography and other objectionable material may be insufficient to promote physical offending in a manner similar to that portrayed in the content of such material. However, the research and theory discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis suggests that only individuals with a definite interest in the content of such material will be likely to repeatedly expose themselves to it. In turn, the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three of this thesis suggests that a lack of previous physical offences on the part of individuals who are interested in the content of objectionable material may be due to the influence of social ties in their lives that prevented such behaviour.

The Internet provides the means for individuals to easily and cheaply access material that can be used to 'feed' any pre-existing fantasies and desires that drive their interest in objectionable material. Furthermore, this access is commonly perceived to be anonymous. Perhaps most importantly, however, it provides the opportunity for these individuals to form social ties to others who will actually support and encourage their interest in the content of objectionable material and associated physical offence activities.

As described in Chapter Three, the concept of Interpersonal Coherence upon which the second hypothesis of this thesis is grounded, derives from Narrative Theory. Narrative Theory suggests that an individual's self concept, as derived from past behaviour and relationships, may be particularly important in determining future behaviour, including future offence behaviour. Certainly, research showing that one of the best predictors of future sexual offending is prior sexual offending (Langevin, Curnoe, Federoff, Bennett, Langevin, Peever, Pettica and Sandhu, 2004) appears to support this conclusion. In the case of offenders whose self concept is tied to being socially accepted by friends and acquaintances, recognition of an interest that could threaten this acceptance may cause significant personal distress. The perceived risk of losing social acceptance may thus undermine the perceived benefits of associated activities. In the event that an individual is able to use the Internet to forge new ties that offer a sense of social acceptance and allow expression of an interest in the content of objectionable material, however, the perceived risks of this expression would reduce. Furthermore, given the highly personal, reciprocal nature of some of the on-line relationships identified in relation to the current sample of

Internet censorship offenders, the results suggest that some individuals may actually be motivated to commit physical offences to maintain their on-line contacts.

Socially Motivated Sexual Offenders

As discussed, in the current sample of Internet censorship offenders, a number of those who demonstrated a preference for using Email and/or ICQ to access objectionable material were involved in producing/generating objectionable text and other material that did not rely on actual physical offences having taken place. Assuming, as the details of associated case studies suggest, that their involvement in the production of objectionable material was at least partly motivated by a desire to share this material with others in the on-line environment, it is not difficult to envisage development of these activities to include physical offence behaviour. Taylor (1999) discusses how the rapid habituation associated with Internet access to objectionable material contributes to continuous demand for associated content. In turn, Taylor and Quayle (2003) and Quayle and Taylor (2002a) describe how new or rare examples of objectionable material provide offenders with significant social currency in the on-line environment. Therefore, once involved in the production of objectionable material for on-line associates it is likely that offenders would feel encouraged to provide ever more unique examples.

As highlighted by McQuail (2000) the Internet and what occurs in virtual space does not exist outside of the 'real world', it exists because of it; therefore, inspiration for production activities is likely to result from real world experiences with individuals. The finding that some offenders used non-objectionable images of children who were known to them to illustrate stories describing child sexual abuse appears to support this

conclusion. Furthermore, case studies from other research regarding Internet involvement with objectionable material suggest that images portraying individuals to whom offenders have some physical connection are particularly valued by on-line associates (Quayle and Taylor, 2002a). If on-line social reinforcement contributes to reducing off-line inhibitions regarding physical offence behaviours (McGrath and Casey, 2002; McKenna and Bargh, 1998; Surette, 1998), any encouragement and reinforcement for further involvement in the production of objectionable material could lead to the abuse of real people for this purpose. Social and moral constraints on physical offence behaviour may also be reduced by a perception that responsibility for these production activities is shared between those who produce and those who demand objectionable material (Milgram, 1968, 1974; Reed and Yeager, 1996).

The possibility that socially oriented offenders who are involved in the production of objectionable material may commit physical offences as a means of producing additional examples of this material is supported by the statistically significant association between such behaviour and offenders having established 'legitimate' off-line access to children (eg. as a scout master or soccer coach). These results also appear to provide support for further exploration of the hypothesis that offenders' who receive on-line social reinforcement for their involvement in Internet censorship offending will be more likely than those who do not to develop previously untried off-line expressions of their interest in the content of objectionable material.

Associated Legislation and Law Enforcement Policy

The idea of social reinforcement in the Internet environment contributing to the likelihood that physical offences will occur appears to conform to media conceptualisations of ‘bands of paedophiles’ using objectionable material to form on-line ‘support groups’ and networks for accessing victims. However, the current research suggests that established sexual offenders are unlikely to seek out on-line support. For these individuals, physical offending is already part of their self concept and social influence is irrelevant to its expression. This lack of social motivation also suggests a decreased likelihood that they would share, with on-line associates, objectionable material produced as a by-product of physically offending, unless for financial profit. Rather, the results of the current research propose that some individuals may commit physical offences as a by-product of their involvement in censorship offending¹¹⁴. This proposal highlights the importance of treating censorship offending as a serious and problematic crime, regardless of the direction of the relationship between objectionable media content and objectionable action.

Furthermore, even if on-line reinforcement of offenders’ involvement in the production of objectionable material does not result in the physical abuse of subjects portrayed in future productions; the tendency for offenders to illustrate text based descriptions of child sexual abuse with the names, descriptions and images of actual children is sufficient to

¹¹⁴ As further support of this conclusion, the author highlights a number of relatively recent law enforcement cases (eg. the Wonderland and Orchid Clubs) in which networks of offenders were identified as logging on to the Internet simultaneously to instruct in the live sexual abuse of a child by one of their members. This abuse was viewed by the entire network through visual feeds from the computer of the individual who was abusing the child to the computers of his on-line associates.

raise concerns about any further involvement in these activities. Given the difficulty associated with trying to delete images and information once it has been circulated on the Internet (Taylor and Quayle, 2003), this practice begs the question of what would happen if the children presented as having sustained abuse were to discover the material written about them? Furthermore, it is possible (if not probable) that having being identified as vulnerable to sexual abuse, these children may be at greater risk of predatory behaviour by other offenders. As stated by Lyons, Anderson and Larson (1994) written material has been found to have a greater effect on physical arousal than images.

While New Zealand legislation recognises text as a form of objectionable material, conviction on the basis of such material alone is rare. Indeed, in all of the cases identified in the current research, the text based material was considered secondary to the images traded by, or found in possession of offenders. In other jurisdictions, such as the United States, written material concerning the abuse of children or any other being is protected under statutes pertaining to the freedom of expression.

There are certainly good reasons to tolerate material that describes abusive relationships, not least of which relate to the importance of communicating information aimed at raising awareness of, or preventing abuse. In addition, literary works, biographies, and historical accounts may need to describe abusive relationships as a means of conveying information necessary to understanding the actions of those involved. However, when written descriptions of abuse do not serve any purpose other than glorifying the abuse or the abuser, and when this material places at its centre real children, described or even

photographed in such a way that they may be identified, one must ask whether the material is itself abusive.

In light of these considerations, it is suggested that possession of objectionable material other than still or moving photographic images, particularly written material, may justify increased investment of investigative resources, above and beyond that needed to prove the censorship offence. This material is easier to produce and circulate than images, however, it may indicate almost as great a risk to those involved, either directly or indirectly, in its production. By identifying producers of such material, investigators may be able to track the identities of the children or other individuals who inspired it and in doing so put strategies in place to prevent further abuse from occurring. In line with the offence patterns demonstrated by these individuals, identification of offender involvement in the collection and/or distribution of non-objectionable images may also indicate the need to further investigate the origin of the material involved, especially if found in possession of offenders involved in the production of objectionable material.

Grounds for Prosecution

While the anecdotal evidence (see Appendix F) provided as part of the research discussed here revealed that law enforcement officers commonly cite large numbers of objectionable images as one of the most important grounds for prosecution, the results of the analyses undertaken as part of this thesis suggest that on its own this criteria may not be the most effective way of targeting resources. Indeed, it is of note that in terms of the current research, possession of large numbers of objectionable images was not found to be strongly associated with the production of objectionable material.

Although concerning, especially in relation to issues of demand and supply, there are reasons other than desire that may result in offenders being identified in possession of smaller caches. For instance, a number of the offenders identified in the current sample were found to focus their offence behaviours on the collection of images of sexual violence and degradation. In several cases these collections included images of children being subjected to violent and degrading activities during sexual contact. Images of violence and degradation of children appear to be relatively rare and, as such, it may simply not be possible for offenders to collect them in large quantities. However, assuming that images of this nature are provided to offenders by on-line associates, and that these associates receive positive reinforcement for their ‘offerings’, it is not unreasonable to propose that further demand may lead to supply. The fact that even one child is subjected to abuse of this nature is concerning.

The results of the research discussed here suggest that even if only a few images portray children (or other individuals) in a manner that would clearly cause them significant physical harm in the short term, their origin should be pursued, at least in so far as identifying the suppliers of these images. In order to facilitate detection of these individuals, it may be necessary for agencies involved in investigating and prosecuting Internet censorship offence activities to review the way in which they consider forms of objectionable material other than child pornography.

Judicial Interventions and the Media

The concept of criminal offenders being at least partially motivated or influenced by social factors in the offence environment is not new. However, it is generally applied to property offences, public space offences and offences involving common assault. Given that the bulk of the censorship offences sampled in the current research involved access to child pornography, together with the identified association between involvement in online relationships and motives to commit future censorship and physical offences, the findings discussed in this chapter suggest that social influence should also be considered an important aspect of censorship and sexual offending behaviour.

Consideration of social influence associated with offending is important as it may be used to identify strategies to prevent future offence involvement. For instance, community based crime prevention programs aimed at undermining gang activity and reducing juvenile delinquency commonly focus on reinforcing pro-social relationships between ‘at risk’ individuals and community members who are not involved in offending (Crawford, 1998; Wright et al, 2001). In the context of censorship offences, the discovery that individuals may be at least partially motivated to commit an offence for the offence specific social reinforcement that such activity provides suggests the potential for pro-social reinforcement to play a significant role in the treatment and management of some offenders. In line with this conclusion, the anecdotal data provided by the CCU investigators (see Appendix F) revealed that the social support networks available to young censorship offenders were often considered particularly important in deciding

whether or not to prosecute an offence. However, these networks did not appear to be considered as important in terms of the prosecution and sentencing of older offenders.

The apparent reluctance of law enforcement officers to consider the social networks of older Internet censorship offenders may result from the increased likelihood of recidivism among older individuals (Maruna, 2000). Consequently, the propensity to re-offend may be seen to outweigh the preventative influence of strong social ties to non-offenders. Indeed, while the findings presented in Chapter Six of this thesis provide evidence for the preventative impact that home based social ties may have on Internet offence behaviour, these too seem to be restricted to individuals who lived with parents or grandparents, most of whom were aged less than 25 years and/or unemployed. In relation to these findings, it was hypothesised that some offenders do not progress their offence behaviours because they do not perceive the benefits to outweigh the benefits of investing time and energy in off-line relationships, or because they perceive the risk that detection may pose to these relationships to be too great. This hypothesis was considered most relevant to individuals who were dependent on home based relationships for their social and financial well-being.

It is impossible, and unethical, to require Internet censorship offenders to become socially and financially dependent on others in their home environment (unless they are imprisoned) and even if this were possible, the fact that they have already been detected may undermine any social ties contributing to the preventative aspect of these relationships. However, the current research suggests that while social ties to family and

work colleagues may not, in isolation, be able to control offence behaviour, in combination with appropriately social therapeutic interventions, their importance may currently be under-estimated. This suggestion has implications for the way in which Internet censorship offences are publicly presented.

Mass media treatment of censorship offenders often shows little regard for non-offence based relationships, perhaps assuming that the ‘monsters’ that they attempt to create could in no way be loved or serve any useful social or economic purpose. The research presented here suggests otherwise. It shows that off-line social relationships may have a limiting effect on offence behaviour depending on the benefits that the offender receives via these relationships compared to those received via on-line relationships. Furthermore, the relatively high number of offenders and offenders’ family members who attempted or completed suicide during the investigative process may be an indicator of the pressure that such reporting, or an associated fear of publicity, puts on these already vulnerable relationships. In sentencing these individuals, the decision to lift name suppression should be weighed against the potential benefit of retaining the anonymity of the offender and his or her family, especially if the offender does not appear to pose an immediate risk to those around them. In cases where offenders demonstrate significant involvement in on-line relationships, any intervention offered should also include intervention for those who may be able to support the offender off-line as they may have an important role to play in the rehabilitative process. In particular, given the large number of young offenders identified in the sample, interventions aimed at supporting parents and

caregivers to assist their children to find appropriate outlets for their emerging sexuality have the potential to have significant effect.

The Need to Recognise Diversity

While the results of the current research highlight the potential significance of on-line social influence in terms of the commission of Internet censorship and associated offences, it also shows that a proportion of offenders are unlikely to seek or be affected by social contact during their involvement in censorship and associated offence behaviour. In contrast to socially motivated Internet censorship offenders, the offence behaviour of these individuals did not appear to be socially motivated in any way and while they may have received advice and assistance as a result of on-line contact during their offence behaviours, this contact did not appear to result in providing their behaviour with any specific direction. On the contrary, the direction of their behaviour appeared to have been established prior to their involvement with the Internet, with the latter being perceived as a medium of increased opportunity to be used instrumentally to achieve over-riding goals of physical gratification.

It appears unlikely that these (non-socially motivated) individuals would benefit from socially oriented interventions or treatment options. Indeed, while the mass media frequently refers to Internet censorship offenders as paedophiles, the fact that so many of those identified in the current sample were able to maintain social and sexual relationships with adults suggests that, at least in terms of the psychological definition, this label may be misleading. However, the significant association between on and off-line isolation, previous conviction in relation to physical offending against children, and

Internet based contact with children suggests that the subset of ‘socially independent’ offenders may certainly conform to this definition. In turn, intervention and treatment targeting these individuals needs to acknowledge issues associated with this predilection. As a first step in this process, strategies need to be developed to recognise the different motivations and offence behaviours of different individuals identified in relation to Internet censorship offending. It is hoped that this thesis has contributed somewhat towards this objective.

Limitations of the Current Research and Avenues for Future Investigation.

The way in which the research presented here was undertaken means that only those offenders who were detected by the New Zealand CCU were sampled. Given financial, technological and temporal limitations on the activities of this agency¹¹⁵, it is possible, if not probable, that many other forms of Internet censorship offending exist than are described here. Indeed, in light of the use of applications facilitating direct, personal, on-line social interaction by a number of the Internet censorship offenders sampled, it is not unreasonable to hypothesise that one such form may include offender involvement in highly exclusive on-line relationships, supported by difficult to detect software applications and/or security. Although international law enforcement operations have infiltrated Internet (primarily IRC) based groups operating along these lines (such as the Orchid and Wonderland clubs¹¹⁴); with the advent of P2P Internet communication networks the possibility that even more sophisticated examples are in existence cannot be

¹¹⁵ In New Zealand, no other agencies are directly involved in investigating Internet censorship offending.

dismissed¹¹⁶. Furthermore, while advances in law enforcement technology may assist to overcome some of the difficulties associated with their detection, history has shown that no sooner is a new technology introduced than another application is developed to counter its effectiveness (Durkin and Bryant, 1995; Feather, 1999).

It is important to recognise that in most Internet censorship investigations, it is not the technology that yields results, but rather the insight and experience of the officers using the technology together with the inevitable human fallibility of the offenders. While it is impossible to know when an offender will ‘make a mistake’, research into the patterns of offence behaviours can assist to enhance the insight and experience of the officers involved. The research presented here begins this process by highlighting a number of areas in which future research may prove particularly useful to law enforcement agencies.

Although the data presented in this thesis provide an important step towards understanding the behaviours of Internet censorship offenders; the way in which the data were collected was subject to a number of limitations and in many cases the associations identified during analysis of these data, and the number of offenders identified as being involved in behaviours considered as part of this thesis, were small. Therefore, it is suggested that attempts be made to replicate these findings in larger, more targeted populations of Internet censorship offenders. It is also suggested that future research consider offenders detected in different law enforcement jurisdictions where different methods of law enforcement yield access to different populations of offenders. Of note,

¹¹⁶ At the time of data collection, P2P was relatively new, however recent work by the CCU suggests that it is now one of the most commonly used applications for accessing objectionable material (Sullivan, 2005).

in this respect, is the need to sample as broadly as possible within these jurisdictions to ensure replication. In the current research, sampling occurred during the investigations process and the resulting dataset included a larger proportion of young offenders than has typically been found in research examining Internet based involvement in objectionable material. Many of these young offenders were cautioned, rather than entering the prosecution process. In contrast, most prior research examining Internet based involvement with objectionable material has only sampled populations of convicted offenders. Given the apparent differences between these two groups of offenders, it may also be beneficial for future research to consider populations of offenders who have not yet been detected by law enforcement agencies, perhaps by way of an on-line study.

The differences between younger and older Internet censorship offenders that were observed in the current research also highlight the need for further research concerning the impact of age on Internet censorship offence behaviours and associated activities. Given the significant overlap between offenders' ages and offenders living with parents and/or grandparents, it is possible that age rather than home based social environment contributed to many of the findings regarding offenders who lived with parents and/or grandparents. While the analytical framework and methods used in the current research reduced this likelihood (particularly the use of a statistical procedure that did not count the joint non-occurrence of variables), without further, directed, investigation of the interaction between age and offence behaviour, it cannot be conclusively dismissed.

In line with considerations regarding the impact of age on Internet censorship offence behaviours, future research regarding the social and behavioural characteristics of Internet censorship offenders would also benefit from a longitudinal approach. Such an approach could examine the development of associations between on and off-line relationships and offence involvement. It would also allow the time needed to control for factors such as the nature of social interaction engaged in during both on and off-line interaction and the breadth of relationships associated with each such environment. To these ends, qualitative differences between these interactions would need to be accounted for, particularly as they relate to the mutuality and dependence of the relationships involved. This could be achieved through detailed qualitative interviews with individual offenders in combination with analytical techniques specifically designed to model social networks.

The current research did not involve the directed collection of qualitative data through interviews with offenders and their associates. Given the explorative nature of this research, the scope of the dataset that was used, ethical issues associated with the population under consideration, and well established concerns about the validity of interviews with offender populations, this omission was considered to be acceptable. However, it meant that many of the variables used as indicators of off-line social interaction were based on assumptions that were speculative. In turn, it made interpreting some of the findings of this research very difficult. Of particular note, in this regard, was the finding that being 'partnered' did not appear to exert the same level of control on offence behaviour as being in other home or work based social relationships. While it

was suggested that this effect may be due to home based partnerships being less structured and regulated than work based relationships, it is also possible that home based partnerships are more susceptible to degradation as a result of offence activities. Alternatively, it may be that access to children through home based partner relationships may significantly influence offence behaviour. In the current sample, living with a partner was not found to be significantly associated with living with children. Indeed, only seven¹¹⁷ of the 17 individuals identified as living with children were also identified as living with a partner. Increased samples of offenders who have home based access to children and partners, and interview data regarding the nature and quality of these relationships compared to the nature and quality of other home and work based relationships, are therefore needed to assess the validity of these explanations.

In addition to exploring the quality of relationships associated with specific offender behaviours, the use of an interview methodology during future research efforts would also allow the collection of data regarding psychological variables that reflect anti-sociality (e.g., antisocial attitudes and beliefs, antisocial personality traits, childhood and adolescent history of conduct problems) and locus of control. Past research has shown that individuals who are high in anti-social personality traits, such as impulsivity, attention seeking and risk seeking) have fewer social ties to others and demonstrate higher levels of criminal offence behaviour (Andrews and Bonta, 1994; Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990; Seto and Eke, 2005). Given these findings, it is possible that the relationship between low levels of on and off-line social interaction and high levels of

¹¹⁷ And only in five of these cases were the children's age and/or gender similar to the age or gender of children portrayed in the objectionable material selected or traded by the offenders.

prior contact offences observed in the current research may simply be an artefact of offenders' underlying anti-social tendencies. Similarly, research considering the psychological variable of locus of control suggests that young people who have a strong external locus of control are more likely to be influenced by peer relationships (Clarke, MacPherson and Holmes, 1982; Hendricks & Fullilove, 1983). In turn, consideration of the locus of control demonstrated by Internet censorship offenders may assist in explaining the influence of on-line relationships on offence behaviour.

Finally, it is suggested that ongoing research in the area of Internet censorship offences re-examine the validity of the different types of Internet censorship offence behaviour identified in this thesis (eg. producers, collectors, opportunist offenders and those who demonstrate significant constraints on offence behaviours) and explore further the different types of off-line relationships associated with each. It would be of particular interest to compare off-line interactions that are neither home nor work based with on-line interactions during the commission of Internet censorship offences. It would also be productive to further examine the way in which interactions between home and work variables impact on offence behaviour.

Conclusions

This thesis aimed to explore the relationship between off-line social interactions, on-line social interaction and the level of involvement in Internet censorship offending and offence related activities of a sample of 145 Internet censorship offenders. These offenders were investigated by the New Zealand Censorship Compliance Unit (CCU) between 1996 and 2002. The results of analyses undertaken using data collected during

the investigation process showed that these offenders differ according to age, relationship and work status, level of involvement in offending and associated activities, and method of offending. In turn, it was found that:

- Internet censorship offenders who used Internet applications (ICQ or Email) to facilitate direct, two way interaction with other offenders demonstrated greater involvement in offence related activities than those who did not.
- Offenders living and/or working in environments conducive to off-line social interaction were more likely to use Internet applications facilitating on-line social interaction during the process of accessing objectionable material.

These results provide support for the integration of Sampson and Laubs (1993) Age Graded Theory of Social Control and Canters (1995) concept of Interpersonal Coherence between criminal and non-criminal social behaviours in understanding, and predicting, the behaviour of individual Internet censorship offenders.

As indicated by Sampson and Laub, (1993) the findings suggest that individuals who engage in direct, mutually reinforcing Internet based relationships with other censorship offenders will be more likely to also invest significant time and energy in Internet censorship offence activities and related behaviours, than those who do not. In the absence of Internet censorship offenders demonstrating an established history of physical offending; these results suggest that Internet censorship offenders who regularly engage in this type of interaction with other offenders will be most likely to increase the range of

behaviours in their offence repertoire. They may also go on to commit physical offences similar to those portrayed in the objectionable images they select. Indeed, in some cases, the social reinforcement sought by these offenders through on-line interaction may actually require that individuals are abused as part of the production of objectionable material for on-line distribution. In line with Canters (1995) concept of Interpersonal Coherence, the findings of the current research suggest that offenders who experience increased opportunities for off-line social interaction in their home or work environments will be more likely than others to engage in on-line social interaction during the commission of their offences. Taken together, these results highlight the potential value in distinguishing between the social and instrumental motivations of Internet censorship offenders, during both the investigation and prosecution process. In turn, the different ways in which different offenders made use of the Internet during the acquisition of objectionable material, and the different motivations that appeared to underpin these uses, provide support for the application of a uses and gratifications model of media involvement as a means of developing further understanding of these behaviours.

The results also suggest a number of avenues for future research regarding the phenomenon of Internet censorship offending and the social and behavioural characteristics of individuals who commit these offences. The data used in the analyses undertaken as part of this thesis were collected using a checklist completed by CCU investigators and any qualitative information accompanying the checklists was anecdotal to the research itself. In order to verify the findings presented here, additional, focused qualitative research is recommended. This research should consider the reasons that

offenders give for their interactions within the Internet environment as well as their perceptions of their off-line relationships, including relationships outside of the home or work environment. Similarly, despite the development of a rudimentary system for identifying different types of Internet censorship offender additional research is needed to test the reliability of these typologies.

As in all preliminary research, the results discussed in this chapter are subject to limitations arising from the sample and methodology used. However, despite these limitations, these results have clearly demonstrated the potential value in distinguishing between Internet censorship offenders who are at least partially socially motivated in their offence behaviour and those who are not. Indeed, the relative complexity of the findings suggests that within each of these groups, several more types of offender may exist, each of whom demonstrates different offence behaviours, and potential outcomes in relation to offence activity. The results also highlight the complex relationship between what offenders do in the cyber-world and their social reality outside of this world. In turn, they support Blumler (1985) in advocating the development of an integrated model of media uses and gratifications, accounting for the way in which individuals live their 'everyday lives' and the ways in which lifestyle factors affect media use.

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